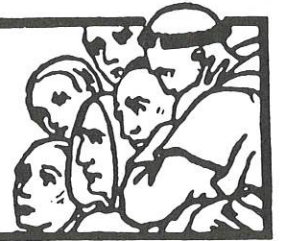




# Thomas Aquinas College **NEWSLETTER**

SPRING 1978

26812 W. Mulholland Hwy., Calabasas, California 91302



## **CONSTRUCTION BEGINS AT NEW CAMPUS**

Ground breaking ceremonies marking the beginning of construction on the new campus of Thomas Aquinas College were held on January 25th. The ceremonies were attended by officials, board members and friends of the College; by city and county officials; and by representatives of the educational and Catholic communities in Ventura County. Located on the Ferndale Ranch in Ventura County northwest of Los Angeles, the new campus will eventually provide full academic and residence facilities for 350 students. The California mission-style campus was designed by the Los Angeles architectural firm of Albert C. Martin & Associates. Plans call for completion of the initial buildings in time for occupancy next September.

In commenting on the significance of the event, College President Dr. Ronald P. McArthur said, "This step is of great importance for the future of the College. It will provide the assured permanence of owning our own campus and allow us to expand in the coming years. With the help of Divine Providence, the College has met with tremendous success since its founding in 1971. With this move we will assure the continuation and development of the good work which has been made possible by the sacrifice of so many."

The property where the new campus is to be built was donated several years ago by Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Barker, Jr. of San Francisco. The College has spent almost two years obtaining a conditional use permit from the County of Ventura. With the granting of the permit last June, the architects were authorized to proceed with detailed design work while the College intensified its efforts to obtain the funding needed for initial construction. Plans to proceed this year became definite when the College was informed in October that its present leased campus had been sold



**Dr. McArthur breaking ground for new campus. Mr. Lawrence Barker, donator of ranch, and Mr. Thomas Sullivan, Chairman of the Board of Governors, look on.**

and would not be available to the College next year.

According to the Master Plan, Phase I will provide full facilities for 160 students and partial facilities for many more. Current cost estimates for Phase I total \$6.3 million. Construction scheduled for completion in the fall will include infrastructure, such as sewage and water systems; site development, such as roads, landscaping, and athletic facilities; and five of the eight buildings planned for Phase I. This is estimated to cost \$4.5 million. The remaining Phase I buildings will be built as soon as funding can be obtained. The MacLeod Construction Co. of Ventura County will be the general contractor and construction manager for the first phase of the campus.

"The difficulty of securing \$4.5 million in contributions, our interim goal, is very great for a college so young," according to Dr. McArthur. "We have been able to secure a substantial portion of the needed funds in cash and pledges

with the help of our board members and long-time friends. We are currently conducting an all out effort to obtain the additional funds we need and we hope to be able to announce further progress within the next few weeks. Actually, we need any and all assistance at this most critical moment in the history of Thomas Aquinas College. We are asking all those who believe with us in the importance of restoring true Catholic liberal education to join us in prayer, work, and sacrifice."

The Ferndale Ranch, site of the new campus, is the former country estate of the Doheny family and it features a large hacienda, originally designed by architect Wallace Neff, and thirty-five acres of magnificently landscaped grounds. The property is set against a backdrop of the Los Padres National Forest. The new buildings will be built on a seventy-five acre pasture adjacent to the existing landscaped area. The property is located between Santa Paula and Ojai on Highway 150 in Ventura County.

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching has most recently published a book called *Mission of the College Curriculum*. It is, in their words, a contemporary review with suggestions. It is replete with the time-worn slogans, sociological jargon, and charts to match, with which educationalists hide their aimlessness and confusion, and it adds up to a reiteration of the same confusion which is supposed to have occasioned the book in the first place.

But certain tendencies become clarified as you read. Despite all the jargon and the confusion it engenders, we are reading about college education as if man were the highest being in the universe, and as if education is to equip him in some way to realize that excellence. There is nothing about God, or our relationship to Him, or about learning for its own sake, or about measuring our lives by principles of which we are not the authors. All comes from man and is ordered to him, which is but another manifestation of the modern attempt to construct a world without God or the supernatural. This fundamental assessment of the world is accepted tacitly, without even the shadow of an argument for it or a defense of it. It is based, so far as one can tell, on appetite alone.

The document contrasts the present difficulties of stating one's educational intentions with the comparative ease with which the founders of our first colleges stated their intentions. "The curricula of modern colleges and universities," they say "can no longer be governed by the unified cultural objectives of colonial times. Instead, our heterogeneous society and the extraordinary increase in specialized knowledge since the founding of Harvard pose genuine dilemmas. Ancient Harvard and Yale could impose a totally required program of studies on their students, but our modern universities must offer a variety of ways of achieving the bachelor's degree." No determinate reason is given for the necessity of offering the different means of achieving the bachelor's degree, or why Harvard and Yale could impose their required curricula. They assume, however, that our intellectual world is more complicated, that our society is pluralistic, and that our present undergraduates do not know, as did their predecessors in colonial times, "how course and degree requirements

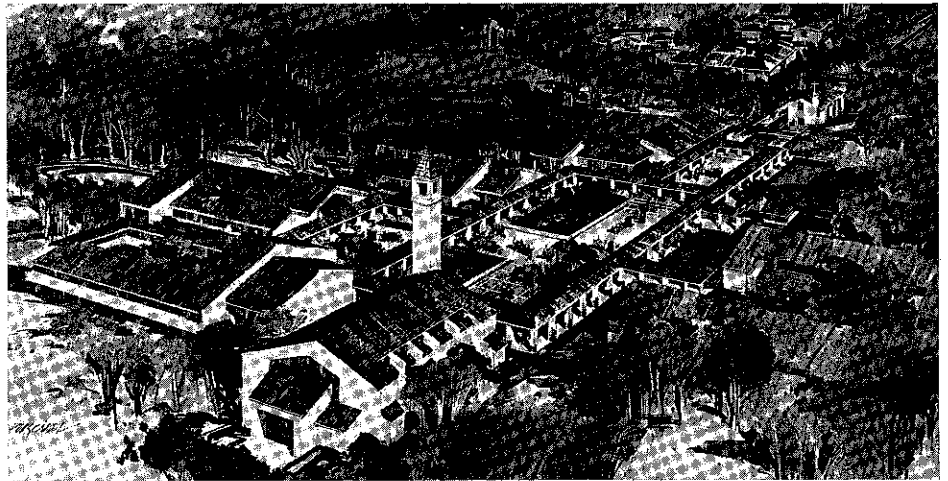
relate to the nature of this society."

Now these positions are certainly arguable. Is it true that the modern world of intelligence is essentially more complicated than it was at other times? Is it true that our society is pluralistic in an essentially different way than it ever was? Is it true that undergraduates of previous times knew, in any clear way, the relationship of their curriculum to this society? Is it clear that a fuller re-

quired program is impossible? or foolish? or deficient?

One would think, given the confusion that besets our times in reference to education, that there would be an attempt to unify the learning of undergraduates around a curriculum that could lead those disposed toward a genuine education.

Ronald P. McArthur  
*President*



Artist's conception of the college campus.

## CONSTRUCTION *continued*

Moving to the new facilities will enable the College to enlarge its freshman class by fifty percent to a total of fifty stu-

dents. It will thus be able to accommodate more of the excellent young men and women who apply in increasing numbers every year.



A few of the over 70 dignitaries who participated in the ground breaking ceremonies at the Ferndale Ranch.

# OPEN LETTER TO STUDENTS

Dear Friends,

Now that I am studying at the Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas in Rome (generally known as the Angelicum), I have come to realize just what a blessing you students have. The Angelicum is reputed to be one of the finest schools in Europe, and yet your own Thomas Aquinas College stands head and shoulders above even such highly-regarded schools as the Angelicum. So take stock and be grateful for your blessings.

First of all, you are acquiring the tools to judge intelligently those important questions which every man must face in his life, which tools fewer and fewer men seem to have or use.

Secondly, you study the original texts of the men whose writings have had a great influence on the world, pursuing the truth as if it really matters (a position not universally accepted even here). It is so very important that men examine the arguments for themselves, instead of accepting without question the conclusions of some commentator or teacher, no matter how good he may be. Only then will men be worthy of the dignity God has given them as intelligent creatures, made in His own image and likeness.

Thirdly, you use the tutorial method of teaching, in which each student is able and encouraged to actively engage in the pursuit of the truth at hand. This method is more in accord with man's rational nature, which means, concretely, that the student can and does learn better than with the conventional lecture method.

Over and above these things, you have some special advantages which are sort of the icing on the cake. These include a faculty who, without exception, hold that truth can be known and is worth the pursuit, and an atmosphere which lends itself to this pursuit, rather than squelching it. Finally, and perhaps most important, you have a community in which Christian charity is found in unusual abundance — a great treasure indeed!

So my good friends, do not take your blessings for granted. Rather, thank the Lord for His generosity in the gifts you have received. If you grow weary of the pursuit of truth from time to time, remember that the best things are difficult to attain but worth every bit of the effort. Then ask Our Lady, Seat of Wisdom, for her assistance, and do the best you can. And if there is friction in the community at times (as is bound to

happen in this life), let your charity make up for the faults of others. It is through carrying our crosses patiently that we prove our love for Him who is worthy of all love, Our Lord Jesus Christ.

As always, my prayers are with you. God bless you all.

Yours in Christ,  
Jim Montanaro  
Class of 1977

## COLLEGE NAMES NEW ADMISSIONS COUNSELOR

The Instruction Committee of Thomas Aquinas College announced the appointment of Miss Anne Wynne to the position of Admissions Counselor. Miss Wynne comes to the position with the most appropriate credentials — she is a former graduate of the College and therefore can speak to prospective students from firsthand experience.

Miss Wynne takes over the position from Mr. Dennis Koller who has been the Admissions Director since the school opened. Mr. Koller was recently appointed Assistant to the President and in such capacity will be working in the development area.

## ESCAPE FROM SCEPTICISM

# NEW BOOK FARES WELL

## ESCAPE FROM SCEPTICISM

*Liberal Education as if Truth Mattered*



**Christopher Derrick**

Early last year, the first book written about Thomas Aquinas College made its appearance. *Escape from Scepticism* was written by the British author, critic and lecturer, Christopher Derrick.

Mr. Derrick first visited Thomas Aquinas in the fall of 1974 in connection with the College's lecture series. Impressed by the uncommon soundness of the school's curriculum and way of life, Mr. Derrick returned in the spring of 1975 to spend several weeks on campus interviewing students, attending classes, and beginning drafts of what was to become *Escape from Scepticism*.

In discussing the origin of the book, published in summer of 1977, Mr. Derrick states that it arose from "an attempt

to analyze my own strongly positive response to the experience of visiting one small and newly established institution." But far from being a strictly personal journal, *Escape from Scepticism* bears an important message for parents, students, teachers, and anyone concerned with the challenges of higher education.

It is a book that appeals to parents, anxious to secure the happiness and moral welfare of their college-age children in an era of youthful cynicism and ever-lowering ethical standards. In distinguishing the morally healthy atmosphere of Thomas Aquinas College from the unthought permissiveness of most contemporary institutions of higher

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# NEW MEMBERS ADDED TO BOARD



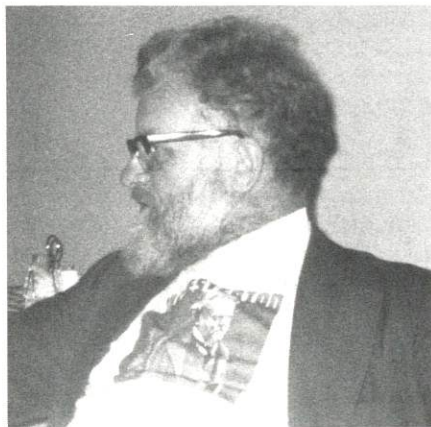
**CARL N. KARCHER** — Anaheim, California

Mr. Karcher is an American success story. Coming to California in 1939, he borrowed \$311 against his automobile and purchased a hot dog cart in central Los Angeles. Today he owns a chain of 225 Carl's Jr. Restaurants. Mr. Karcher is active in civic affairs, serving on the Board of Directors of Providence Speech & Hearing Center, St. Jude's Hospital, the Braille Institute, the Orange County Chamber of Commerce, the Southern California Restaurant Association, and the First Friday Friars. He is a member of the California Angels Advisory Board and the Orange County Republican Central Committee. Mr. Karcher has recently been honored by being Knighted by His Eminence Cardinal Terence Cooke of New York, as a Knight of Malta. He and his wife Margaret live in Anaheim, California with their nine daughters and three sons.



**ALAN M. TEAGUE** — Santa Paula, California

Mr. Teague is vice president of Teague-McKevett Co. (citrus and avocado ranching), McKevett Corporation (ranching and investments), Rancho La Cuesta, Ltd. (citrus ranching); partner in Murray-Teague Associates (avocado and other diversified interests); general partner in Limco Del Mar, Ltd. (land development); and on the Board of Directors of the Santa Paula Water Works, Ltd., Middle Road Mutual Water Company, Thermal Belt Mutual Water Company, and the Limoneira Company. In addition to his many business interests, Mr. Teague is past Mayor of the City of Santa Paula and is currently on the Executive Committee of the Ventura County Taxpayers Association, and a board member on the Ventura County Economic Development Association. A graduate of the University of Arizona, Mr. Teague lives in Santa Paula.



**Christopher Derrick**  
Author of "Escape from Scepticism"

## NEW BOOK *continued*

learning, the author observes: "The spirit of barbarian bitterness appears to have taken over to a sad degree . . . I had seen that stress and bitterness in many places: its absence was what struck me first when I came to this rather unusual campus in California."

But the book goes beyond the problem of the moral guidance of the young to a discussion of what a college of liberal arts is **fundamentally** concerned with: the education of the young **for** freedom and **in** freedom. The author points out that the doctrine of fundamental scepticism, almost universally held in the modern academy, "paralyzes and imprisons" the mind by assuming that the human intellect can know nothing with certainty, can arrive at no conclusions concerning the reality of the external world, human nature, or supernatural things. And he asserts that an even greater emphasis should be placed upon this debasement of the intellect than upon moral corruption; for it is in the former that the latter has its roots.

In contrast to this fundamentally despairing view, a liberal education, by using as one of its starting points the commonsense assumption that the mind can grasp reality in some meaningful way, frees the learner from "the tyrann



**DANIEL A. MURRAY** — Santa Paula, California

Mr. Murray is managing general partner of Limco Del Mar, Ltd., a citrus ranching and property development partnership; a partner in Murray-Teague Associates, an avocado ranch management firm; and a partner in J-M-T Oil Company, a local business which, in addition to managing its own production, handles field service for many of the larger, well-known oil companies. In addition to his numerous business responsibilities, Mr. Murray is deeply involved in civic activities. He is recent past president of the Santa Paula Chamber of Commerce and Planning Commission Chairman. In 1970, Mr. Murray was named Santa Paula's Most Distinguished Citizen. He and his wife Joan have four children and three grandchildren.

**RICHARD L. NOBLE** — L.A., California

Mr. Noble is a partner in the Los Angeles based law firm of Noble, Campbell and Uhler. He is a graduate of Stanford University and Stanford Law School.

ny of permissiveness, both personal and intellectual," and enables him to pursue the truth in the hope of finding it. Thus the assumption of the profound intelligibility of reality is essential to a true liberal education, which "will only be itself when conducted as though the thing that mattered was truth."

"It may seem absolutely pretentious," wrote Paul Hallett recently in the *National Catholic Register*, "to compare this book with Newman's *Idea of a University*, but the comparison is apt. Derrick here vindicates the notion of a liberal education as Newman did in the last century, and he does what Newman happily did not need to do, defend the place of a Catholic college as an expositor of truth."

Since its publication, *Escape from Scepticism* has sold over 4,500 copies and went into a second printing in December of last year.