VERUM · BONUM · PULCHRUM
Established 1971
The True · The Good · The Beautiful

# THOMAS AQUINAS COLLEGE NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2001

### — With Fr. George Rutler as Homilist

## Francis Cardinal George to Preside Over June Commencement

Francis Cardinal George, O.M.I., the Cardinal Archbishop of Chicago, will preside over 2001 Commencement ceremonies at Thomas Aquinas College on June 9. This will be Cardinal George's first trip to the College.

"We are honored to have Cardinal George with us for this event," said President Thomas E. Dillon. Cardinal George will receive the Thomas Aquinas Medallion, established in 1975 by the Board of Governors to recognize and honor those who have demonstrated an extraordinary dedication to God and His Church. The Medallion has been awarded at commencement ceremonies nearly every year since then.

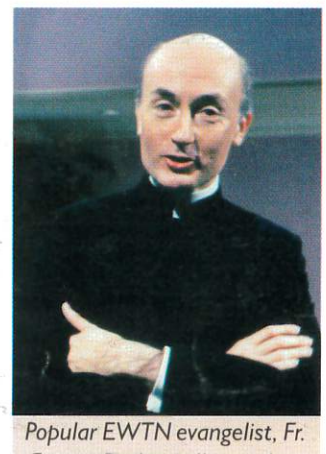
"Cardinal George has shown exemplary loyalty and devotion to the Holy Father and the Magisterium of the Church," said Dillon. "As the Cardinal Archbishop of Chicago, and in many other offices, he has worked tirelessly to proclaim, support and defend the teachings of the Church, and to advance the mission of Christ on earth."

President Dillon first visited with Cardinal George when he was serving as Archbishop of Portland, Oregon, in 1996. "He couldn't have been more kind to me," said Dillon. "He saw very clearly what our mission at Thomas Aquinas College is about and offered to do whatever he could to help us. That he is taking time out of his very demanding schedule just to be with us for our Commencement ceremonies is a sign of his commitment to our mission."

*Chicago's Cardinal George, whom Pope John Paul II asked to preach the annual Lenten retreat for the Holy Father and members of the Roman Curia, will receive the Thomas Aquinas Medallion at the June 9 Commencement ceremonies.*

Earlier this year, Pope John Paul II asked Cardinal George to preach the annual Lenten retreat for the Holy Father and other members of the Roman Curia, an experience he described as "very daunting." But his day-to-day responsibilities are just as daunting. He oversees 2.3 million Catholics, 378 parishes, nearly 1,000 diocesan priests, 3,500 sisters, and almost 19,000 employees in parishes, schools, charities, and other works of the Archdiocese. The Chicago Catholic school system is the nation's largest Catholic school system and the nation's 11th largest school system overall.

Concelebrating the Baccalaureate Mass with Cardinal George and serving as homilist will be Fr. George Rutler, the popular EWTN television and radio personality. Fr. Rutler is a priest of the Archdiocese of New York, in residence at St. Agnes Parish in New York City, and author of ten books on Catholic apologetics and spirituality. He recently authored the foreword to a new edition of *Escape From Skepticism,* a book that English writer Christopher Derrick was inspired to write after his visit to the College in 1977.



*Popular EWTN evangelist, Fr. George Rutler, will preach at the Baccalaureate Mass.*

Fr. Rutler's last visit to the College was in 1997 when he lectured on John Henry Cardinal Newman and Catholic education. Fr. Rutler's column, "Coincidentally," appears each month in *Crisis* magazine. His most recent book, *Brightest and Best* (Ignatius Press, 1998), is a collection of great hymns from the early Patristic period to the twentieth century, with inspiring accounts of their authors, composers and events connected to these hymns, as well as a description of their significance for theology and music.

Ceremonies will begin with Baccalaureate Mass at 9:00 a.m., followed by a continental breakfast and then Commencement at 11:00 a.m.

### — "The Many Meanings of Christian America"

## Fr. Richard John Neuhaus Delivers Annual Presidents' Day Address

Fr. Richard John Neuhaus, president of the Institute for Religion and Public Life and editor-in-chief of *First Things* magazine, lectured to a capacity audience in the St. Joseph Commons on March 2, 2001. Originally scheduled to deliver the College's annual Presidents' Day Address, Fr. Neuhaus was forced to postpone his visit by several days so he could attend the consistory in Rome at which his good friend, Fr. Avery Dulles, was made a cardinal by Pope John Paul II.

Following an all-campus banquet in his honor, Fr. Neuhaus spoke on "The Many Meanings of Christian America," and surveyed the extent to which Catholics have historically been involved in American civic life and exhorted them to continue to be so involved. (His lecture may be reprinted in a forthcoming issue of the College's Lecture Series.)

Fr. Neuhaus is one of the nation's leading thinkers and commentators on the role of religion in public life, and the author and editor of more than 20 books. His 1984 book, *The Naked Public Square,* is widely regarded as the blueprint for President Ronald Reagan's policy on religion in public life; *Christianity Today* named it one of the "Top 100" religious books of the 20th Century. In 1988, he wrote the influential book, *The Catholic Moment: The Paradox of the Church in the Modern World,* while a Lutheran pastor. He has since converted to Catholicism and has been a clear voice for the Church on the role of religion in public life.

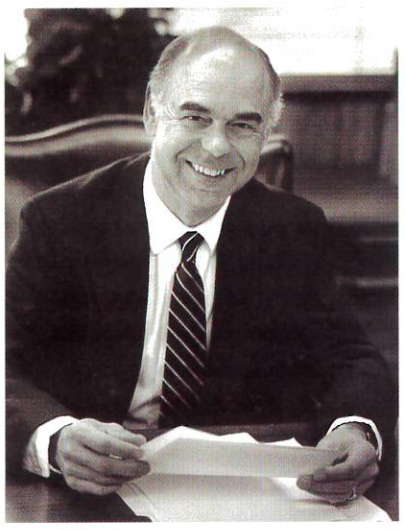
Fr. Neuhaus was also one of the primary architects of *Evangelicals and Catholics Together,* the much-discussed document signed by leading Evangelical Protestants and Roman Catholics in America who aimed to identify common ground in Christian faith.

The College is particularly grateful to Fr. Neuhaus for enduring a grueling travel schedule to deliver the lecture. He was forced to travel from New York City to the College, speak, and then return in less than 24 hours.

*A native of Ontario, Canada, Fr. Neuhaus posed with Canadian comrades at his lecture.*

## In This Issue

## From the Desk of the President



*President Thomas E. Dillon*

One of the joys of my office is that it affords me the opportunity to become acquainted with many fine priests and religious who are accomplishing great things for the Church and our society. One such priest is Fr. C.J. McCloskey III, a member of the Prelature of Opus Dei.

Among his many other duties, Fr. McCloskey is the Director of the Catholic Information Center in Washington, D.C., a center for Mass and the Sacraments for those who work in the shadow of our nation's capital. (You can visit his center on-line at www.cicdc.org, or at his own web page at http://www.catholicity.com/cathedral/mccloskey/.)

Known to EWTN viewers for a number of years from his live commentary during televised papal trips, Fr. McCloskey recently hosted two interview series for EWTN. The first concerned great Catholic authors, for which I did one interview with Fr. McCloskey, concerning St. Augustine's *Confessions*. For the second series, Father interviewed me again about John Henry Cardial Newman and, in particular, his work *The Idea of a University*. For now I would like to share with you a condensed version of the second interview we did about Cardinal Newman.

Though I read some of Cardinal Newman's works while in college, it was not until I became engaged with Thomas Aquinas College that I began to study him more closely. Our founding president, Dr. Ronald P. McArthur, hosted informal discussions of Newman's sermons in his home on campus after Mass on Sundays, which I attended from time to time. Later, as President myself, when preparing periodically to speak formally to our students about liberal education, I would inevitably consult Newman, finding that he expressed just what I thought, but with far greater clarity, brevity and eloquence. Over the years, then, I have been drawn to explore more and more deeply Newman's thoughts about education.

Cardinal Newman's book *The Idea of a University* is actually a collection of talks that he gave in Dublin over a period of three or four years. While yet a new English convert to Catholicism at the Birmingham Oratory, he was asked by the Catholic hierarchy of Ireland to assist in the founding of a Catholic university in Dublin, the educational establishment there at the time being mostly Protestant. On his frequent trips to Ireland to develop interest in the project and to set the foundation for what became the University College of Dublin, Newman delivered these lectures about the nature of liberal education and its purpose.

In the course of my interview with Fr. McCloskey there were four main points of discussion. The first may be the most difficult to grasp, given the intense focus on professionalism and vocationalism in higher education. But Newman explains that to the extent one's education is pursued for the sake of usefulness (e.g., the practice of law or medicine), to that same extent it can be described as "servile" — the education itself serves the consequent occupation. But a liberal education is pursued not for its practical use, but because the education is worth having for its own sake. To be sure, it may be put to use, but that is not its purpose. Instead, its purpose is the development of the intellect itself so that it can apprehend truth.

A second point we considered was Newman's concern for the order and hierarchy that naturally exists between and among the various disciplines — another idea with little currency on most college campuses. But for Newman, such an order was obvious. The objects of our knowledge — animals, the stars, humans and their behavior — are all creations of the same God with a certain relation to each other, and therefore our knowledge about these things must be similarly ordered. Here again, the trends to specialize in one or another field and to compartmentalize knowledge have obscured this order. And without a sense of where various kinds of knowledge fit into the grand scheme of things, there can be no hope of wisdom, the crown of liberal education.

> In Newman's *Idea of a University*, he explains that liberal education is pursued not for its practical use but because the education is worth having for its own sake.

Fr. McCloskey and I also discussed the place that theology ought to have in a university. Not surprisingly, Newman thought it should be part of a university, but not as one discipline among many — rather as the discipline that orders all others. Since God is the highest object of our intellects, the science that studies that object, namely theology, should reign as queen over all the sciences, ordering the parts to each other and to itself and enlightening all intellectual pursuits.

We took note, too, of perhaps the most famous and intriguing passage in *The Idea of a University,* called "The Idea of a Gentleman" in which Newman discusses the moral development of the student engaged in liberal education. He clearly states that it is not the province of an education to make one good. A student may become more refined and courteous, and acquire good habits on account of his liberal education, but in the end, that education is insufficient to effect goodness in the soul. Newman saw clearly the necessity of grace and faith.

Towards the end of our interview, Fr. McCloskey asked me to address, on Cardinal Newman's behalf, a frequently raised objection to liberal education. Why should one spend so much time and effort on an education that will not teach a

*- continued on next page*

# Mellon Foundation To Fund Study of Apollonius' Mathematics — Joint Grant Involves St. John's College

Over the next two summers, tutors from Thomas Aquinas College and St. John's College will, thanks to a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, undertake a study of the causes of the fundamental shift that occurred during the transition from ancient to modern mathematics.

Specifically, the study will focus on the mathematical work of French philosopher, Rene Descartes, and on those predecessors whom he sought to supersede – Apollonius (in his work on Conics, with Euclid's *Elements* as a prerequisite), Pappus (on loci and on geometrical problem-solving), Diophantus (on numerical problem-solving), and Viete (the *Introduction to the Analytic Art,* in which problem-solving becomes the core of learning).

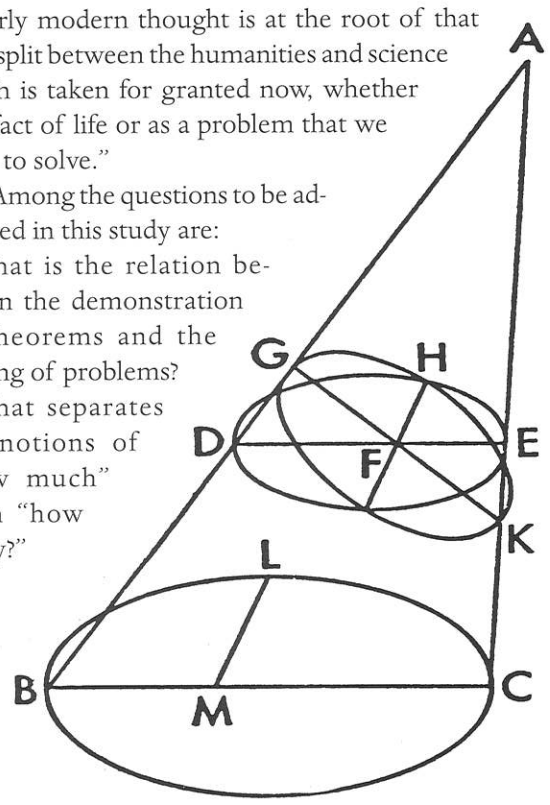
According to the Dean of St. John's College, Harvey Flaumenhaft, who first proposed and who is now overseeing the project, surprisingly little examination has been undertaken in modern times to understand the radical shift that occurred in the 17th century. "Foundations get covered over by what is built upon them."

Understanding why and how that shift occurred is critical to understanding the modern world. According to Dr. Flaumenhaft, the modern world has used graphs and equations instead of geometric-theorem demonstration to obtain mastery over nature. "When the equation replaced the proportion as the heart of mathematics, and geometric theorem-demonstration lost its primacy to algebraic problem-solving, an immense power was generated, transforming not only human life but also the studies in the humanities that sought to understand human life."

Understanding the cause of this transformation in mathematics may help us better understand why the sciences veered away from philosophy and theology in early modern times. Says Dr. Flaumenhaft, "[T]he transformation of classical mathematics that occurred in early modern thought is at the root of that very split between the humanities and science which is taken for granted now, whether as a fact of life or as a problem that we need to solve."

Among the questions to be addressed in this study are:

- What is the relation between the demonstration of theorems and the solving of problems?
- What separates the notions of "how much" from "how many?"




- Why try to overcome that separation by the notion of quantity as represented by a number-line?
- What is the difference between a mathematics of propositions which arises to provide images for viewing being, and a mathematics of equations which arises to provide tools for mastering nature?
- How does mathematics get transformed into what can be taken as a system of signs referring to signs – as a symbolism which is meaningless until applied, when it becomes a source of immense power?
- What is mathematics and why study it?

Much of the study will be based on a draft of Dr. Flaumenhaft's work, *Insights and Manipulations: Classical Geometry and its Transformation – A Guidebook, Volume I: Starting Up with Apollonius; Volume II: From Apollonius to Descartes.* The first of three summer study sessions designed to "field test" the manuscript has already been held.

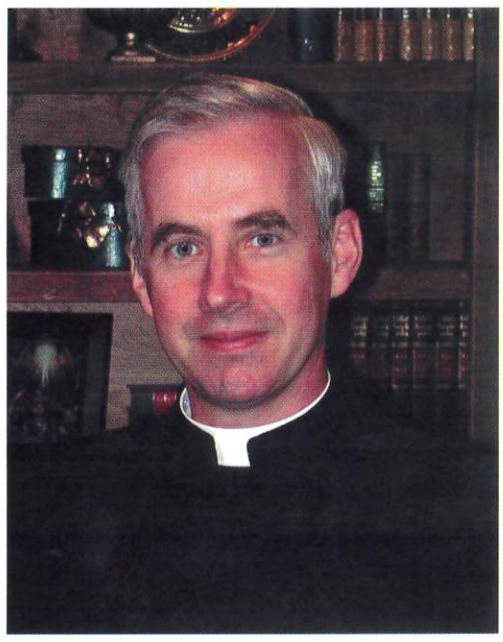
According to Thomas Aquinas College Dean, R. Glen Coughlin, this is the first time tutors from Thomas Aquinas College and St. John's College have undertaken a common study like this. "We hope to do more in the future. We have many common features between our two programs and we are grateful to have the opportunity to participate in such a mutually beneficial forum as this." Coughlin, who graduated from Thomas Aquinas College in 1981 and obtained his doctorate in philosophy at Université Laval, taught at St. John's College for three years before returning to his *alma mater* to teach in 1987.

Like that of St. John's College, the Thomas Aquinas College curriculum devotes four years to the study of mathematics and science. Students cover Euclid's *Elements* during their freshman year, Apollonius' *Conics* in their sophomore year, and Descartes' *Geometrie* in their junior year. Other mathematical works are also studied during these years. Accordingly, the St. John's summer study project is particularly germane to the College's program.

The two tutors from Thomas Aquinas College who will participate in the program this summer are Ronald Richard and John Nieto. They will each receive a stipend to spend eight weeks at St. John's College in Santa Fe, New Mexico, this summer and the following summer. Dr. Richard, a former research engineer at Jet Propulsion Laboratories, with a doctorate in astrophysics and course equivalent work in physics, has been a tutor since 1976. Dr. Nieto graduated from the College in 1989, and received a Ph.D. in philosophy from Notre Dame University. A Fellow with the National Science Foundation, he has been a tutor since 1992.

*continued from previous page*

profession and cannot give its students the means to provide for themselves or their families? To that my answer was twofold. First, because it is the best pursuit for a human being. Our intelligence is the highest part of our nature, by which we are said to be made in the image of God. Its development in the pursuit of truth, then, is the highest activity of human life. That is worth doing regardless of its practical use. But second, one is never harmed by a liberal education; in fact, one's career success can only be enhanced on account of it.



*Fr. C. J. McCloskey's series on Cardinal Newman is being aired on EWTN.*

Fr. McCloskey concluded the interview by asking me to consider whether Newman would feel comfortable visiting a class at the College. I told him that in all honesty I thought he would feel more than comfortable because he would be able to see on our campus, a kind of embodiment of the plan for liberal education he envisioned so many years ago for the Irish university. For, in many ways, we implement Cardinal Newman's ideas at Thomas Aquinas College. We read many of the same kinds of works he prescribed, and we are engaged in the kind of intellectual enterprise he thought would cultivate the intelligence and order it to truth. And we provide numerous opportunities — through our campus customs, the daily availability of Mass and the sacraments, the presence of our chaplains — for the lessons learned in the classroom to take root through grace in the souls of our students. But he would see, too, our human failings even as we strive to live out the life of learning he so well articulated. And so we ask that Venerable John Henry Cardinal Newman intercede for us that we not impede the good that God desires to accomplish through Thomas Aquinas College, but rather nurture and sustain it.

I am grateful to Fr. McCloskey for highlighting the importance of Cardinal Newman's ideas, and for giving me the opportunity to discuss those ideas with him in his television series on EWTN.

# Career Day Helps Students Ponder Life Hereafter

"One of the things we are trying harder to do here for our students is to get them to think about vocational possibilities for them once they graduate," said tutor and career counselor, Mike Letteney. "A lot of them are simply surprised to find out the array of options available to someone who graduates with a classic liberal arts degree."

Letteney brought together nine presenters for the College's annual Career Day on March 3. Two of the presenters provided practical information to assist graduating seniors. Dr. Timothy Smith, a new tutor at the College, advised students on how to prepare applications for graduate school. Since about one-half of the College's graduates pursue further graduate studies, Dr. Smith's presentation filled a critical need for many of the attendees.

For those interested in entering the workforce, Carl Herman, a professional career counselor, advised students about interviewing strategies and resume preparation. "Just because you're smart and well-read, doesn't mean you'll get hired," said Letteney. "We want to impress on our students that there are important customary rituals they will have to endure if they want to get a job."

Many of the presenters Letteney arranged to have speak were Thomas Aquinas College alumni. "I asked them to talk about what they would have liked to have heard when they were students here. Our graduates will often have the best insights about what would be most useful to current students. They know what our students need to hear most."

For example, Ray Tittman (Class of '94), an attorney with the San Francisco office of the nationally-prominent law firm, Paul Hastings Janofsky & Walker, spoke about his life as a corporate and litigation attorney. He cited the positives and negatives. He also addressed concerns regarding the modern practice of law, his moral and ethical responsibilities, and his struggle to balance work and family demands.

"Talks on the legal profession are always of great interest to students," said Letteney. "Roughly 10% of our graduates go to law school, and they are very curious about the issues Ray addressed."

"One student, in fact, after hearing Tittman talk about the daily grind of a lawyer, remarked, 'One thing is clear: I *don't* want to be a lawyer.' So that's an important use for these kinds of talks too. It may be tough to determine what you want to do the rest of your life. But it makes your choice easier if you can at least find out what you *don't* want to do.

"Young students these days can get locked into a profession they're not happy with, because they get into debt and then feel obliged to stick with it. Hearing a real life story can prevent a student from heading down that path." (Note on Tittman: he is a happy lawyer.)

Another popular presenter was Michael Van Hecke, (Class of '86), headmaster of St. Augustine's Academy in nearby Ventura. About one-third of the College's graduating seniors go into the teaching profession. Van Hecke addressed student concerns about how they can best prepare for a career in teaching, where and how to get teaching certificates, and what challenges await them. Van Hecke, with abundant experience serving as headmaster at Ville de Marie in Prescott, Arizona, and at the Highlands in Dallas, Texas, was able to address the many questions students had about these and other issues.

The new Institute of Psychological Services in Alexandria, Virginia, sent two representatives to Career Day, Dr. William Nordling and Timothy Fortin (Class of '91), to talk about career options in psychology. Also presenting were Dr. Thomas Bowman, an Ojai physician, who spoke about careers in medicine, and Mark Kretschmer (Class of '98), a regional manager at Kinko's, who spoke about careers in business.

# Addition of New Men's Residence Will Help College Reach Maximum Size

Construction is underway to complete a new men's residence hall by autumn, 2001. The hall will provide living space for 106 men and includes a three-room suite with a private bath for a resident priest or other non-student.

The additional space will come none too soon: student enrollment will climb to near 300 in September, the largest in the College's 30-year history and a 26% increase over the number enrolled just 5 years ago.

The hall is designed as a two-story version of St. Therese of Lisieux Hall, a women's residence for 64 built in 1999. It will have a similar gated-entry courtyard with a fountain, and a balcony will grace the front of the building. Inside will be three study rooms and four lounge areas, two with fireplaces; the main lounge will be a spacious, two-story room with beamed ceilings and a fireplace. To meet more practical needs, a laundry room, an exercise room and a kitchenette are also planned.

*Construction, which began this spring, is expected to be completed by fall, 2001.*

Anticipated project cost for the 23,900 square-foot building is $3.55 million, including furniture, landscaping and fees. Construction will include improved lighting for the adjacent parts of the campus and enlargement of the parking lot behind the nearby men's residence, Blessed Junipero Serra Hall. The residence will be located just north of Blessed Serra on the former site of the "300" modular dormitory.

R. Scott Boydston of Rasmussen & Associates in Ventura is the chief architect for the building, while the construction has been supervised by HMH Construction, also of Ventura. Both the Rasmussen firm and HMH have been responsible for most of the construction on campus in recent years, including construction of St. Therese's Hall and Albertus Magnus Science Hall. The computer design company ArchFX, also in Ventura, produced a computerized virtual tour of the hall for video viewing purposes. *(See image below.)*

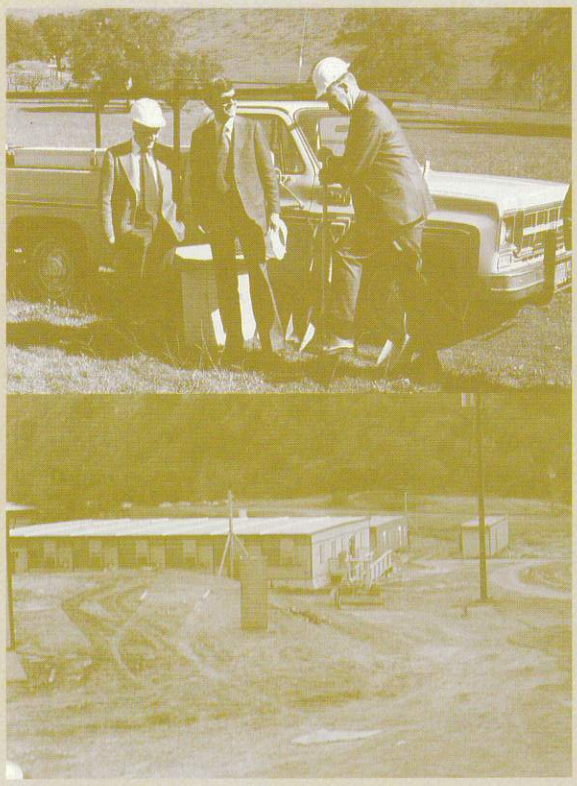
*The two-story residence hall will provide living space for 106 men.*

The College plans for a maximum student body of approximately 350 students. That figure was chosen at the founding of the College. "The founders believed that friendship is the basis of liberal education and for people to become friends, they must be acquainted," said Peter L. DeLuca, III, vice-president for finance and administration, himself a senior tutor and a founder of the College. *(See DeLuca Profile, p. 8).* "We wanted a campus where students and teachers could know each other. We took the 350 number from St. John's College. They had reached 400, decided it was too big, and then started a second campus rather than grow a larger one."

The new residence hall will enable the College to admit 102 freshmen — six class sections of seventeen students each — for the 2002-03 academic year. At the rate of 102 freshmen admitted each year after 2002, the College will reach its optimal size of 350 students by autumn, 2005.

To date, the College has received nearly half of the funds needed for the project. "This building is going up because of the generosity of so many individuals," said President Thomas Dillon. "But we're not out of the woods yet. We have plenty of money left to raise for it. This is a perfect opportunity for benefactors to step forward and make a real difference in the life of this College and in the lives of the many young men and women who will be formed here."

# A Brief History of Thomas Aquinas College:



*[Following is Part II in a three-part series on the history of Thomas Aquinas College. Part I appeared in the Winter 2000-01 issue.]*

In the fall of 1978, Thomas Aquinas College moved from one location to another. How and why the College did so is not quite so simply explained.

For seven years the College leased from the Claretian Order the grounds of its former seminary, Claretville, located in Malibu Canyon outside Calabasas, California. The lease was initially for two years and thereafter from year to year. The College needed a permanent campus and its founders were hoping to purchase Claretville or to establish a campus on their own grounds elsewhere.

Unable to reach a purchase agreement with the Claretians, the College was forced to consider other options. Indeed, at one point, College founders even traveled to Prescott, Arizona to see a possible site.

***– Larry Barker: A Gift From God***

Sometime in 1975, the College's real estate agent, Larry Battliner, alerted College officials to a property located in a remote rural setting outside the town of Santa Paula on what was known as the Ferndale Ranch. The seller's agent was William P. Clark, Sr., whose son by the same name was then a Justice on the California Supreme Court. Clark, Sr., was delighted to help negotiate a sale. (Clark, Jr., who later served as President Reagan's National Security Advisor and Secretary of the Interior, eventually became – and is to this day – a major benefactor of the College.)

College founders toured the property and saw its great potential for a college campus. The property included a large plain and an adjacent lower area on which was situated a 9,000 square foot mission-style hacienda. The house was built as a summer home for the Doheny Family of Los Angeles by architect Wallace Neff in 1929. The house was surrounded by 35 acres of beautifully landscaped grounds with three large reflecting pools. The parcel was situated in a canyon six miles north of the sleepy farming town of Santa Paula amidst the steep mountains of the Los Padres National Forest, a two million acre expanse of rugged wilderness terrain. The founders thought its beautiful and secluded location would make an ideal setting for the Catholic community of learning they envisioned.

But the purchase price of the property – in excess of $2 million – was more than the fledgling College could afford. There were also questions relating to the possible impact of oil and gas rights. Moreover, the owner, Paul Grafe, while sympathetic to the College's mission, wanted to explore all other market options.

*The Claretville property had been sold. The College would have to move, and sooner than anyone had expected.*

One day after a few months of negotiations, Lt. Col. William Lawton, Jr., a founder of the College and then vice president for development, traveled with his wife, Peggy, to the ranch to talk with Grafe. Lawton entreated Grafe to work out a deal, but Grafe told him, "You'll have to dig deep, Sonny." The Lawtons returned home dejected.

The next day, Grafe called Lawton looking for College President Ronald P. McArthur. Grafe wanted McArthur to call a fellow in San Francisco, Larry Barker. Grafe said Barker might be in a position to "help them out." McArthur, who happened to be in San Francisco at co-founder John Schaeffer's law office, called Barker, who happened to be a few blocks away. Barker agreed to meet with McArthur immediately. McArthur told Barker about the College's predicament and Barker offered to give $100,000 to the cause. McArthur demurred; he wanted the property. He asked Barker to meet with him and Schaeffer for lunch the following day. Barker agreed. At the end of the lunch, Barker said he had heard enough. He was going to buy the property from Grafe and give it to the College. Needless to say, the news seemed miraculous. Barker was a God-send.

College officials then investigated the property and its suitability for use as a campus. They engaged the architectural/engineering firm of Albert C. Martin & Associates to prepare a preliminary feasibility study to determine whether and to what extent a campus could be built, from scratch, on 131 acres situated on the Ferndale Ranch. (Ed Martin, a principal in the firm, was a fervent supporter of the College and one of its early board members.) Many questions had to be resolved.

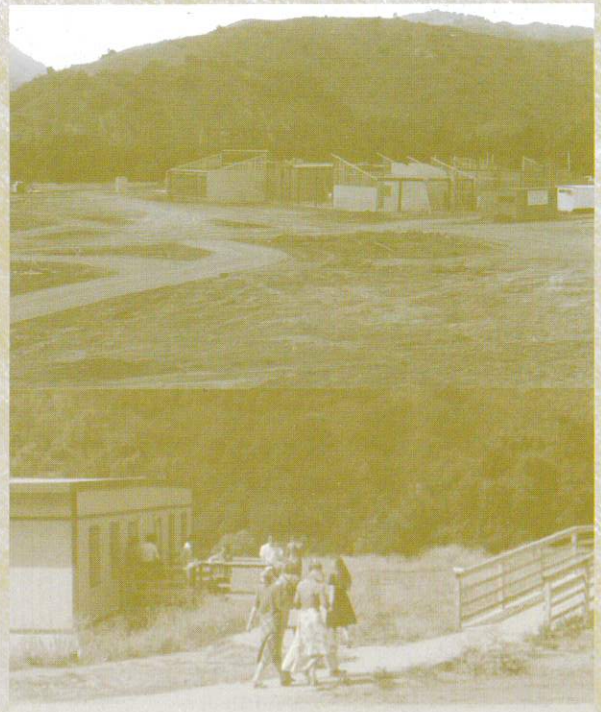
For instance, Barker offered to give the property to the College, but had retained rights to exploit the reservoir of oil beneath the surface. How, and to what extent, would the oil be extracted? How would water, sewers, and electrical power be provided to the property? What permits needed to be secured? What limitations would the County impose on construction? Who had rights of access to the College property – oil trucks, ranch workers, harvesters? Where would the hiking trail to the national forest traverse, through or around the campus?

When answers to these and other questions were resolved, a deal was struck. College officials then began making plans to build the campus there and raise the funds to do it – something they anticipated would occur over a number of years while the College remained at Claretville.

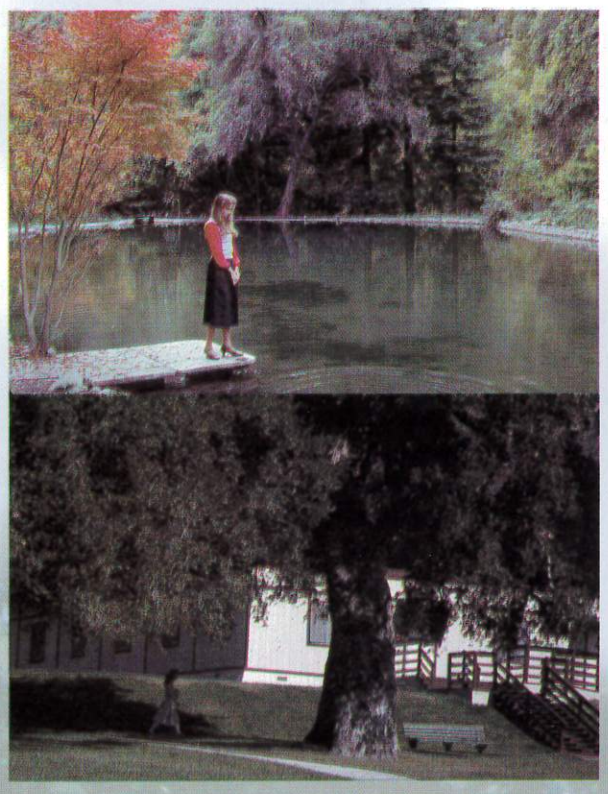
***– Sudden Eviction***

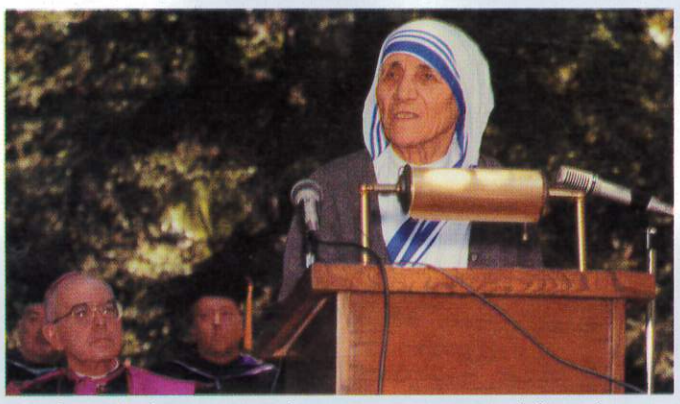
But in October, 1977, plans were accelerated. The Claretians informed the College that the Claretville property had been sold. The College would have to move, and sooner than anyone had expected – by June, at the end of the academic year. Moreover, the details of the sale were unsettling. The new owner, through an option buyer unknown to the Claretians, was the Church Universal and Triumphant, a syncretist "New Age" group headed by the "Ascended Master and Messenger and Vicar of Christ," Elizabeth Clare Prophet. The beautiful old Catholic chapel on campus would have to be decommissioned.

Accordingly, in less than 10 months, the College would have to figure out how to move the campus an hour's drive away to undeveloped land and add enough buildings, temporary or permanent, to house, educate, and feed more than 100 students. With time of the essence, the architects at Albert C. Martin worked on a crash basis to prepare draw-



# Part II – Relocation and Transition





ings for a multi-purpose dining commons and four dormitories, as well as plans for the basic infrastructure – roads, paths, water, sewage, and utilities. Architects completed construction drawings for the commons building and four small dormitories. Construction permits were sought in haste.

And questions mounted by the day. How soon could construction on the main commons building commence? Could it be finished by the fall? How were the students to be housed? How were they to be fed? Where were classes to be held? Nothing was clear; all issues were open, all options under consideration.

***– Sudden Move***

Costs to get the campus designed and approvals secured from the county exceeded one-half million dollars. Costs for additional relocation efforts would approach $3 million. Construction for the 20,000 square-foot Commons building alone was $1.1 million. It would include a cafeteria, a chapel, a library, some offices, and two rooms that could be used for classrooms. And then there were funds needed for operating expenses and student financial aid.

Enough funds were raised at first to go forward with the plans, including a $500,000 gift from oil magnate and conservative philanthropist, Henry Salvatori, and a $100,000 gift from the Dan Murphy Foundation. The bulk of the remainder of the expenses was covered by bank loans and financing arrangements. Such debt burden would plague the College for many years. But the College had no other option.

As it was, by 1978, not enough money was raised to build the four dormitories. So while construction would proceed on the main Commons, provision for temporary living space would be needed in the short-term.

*A mood of good cheer prevailed in spite of flimsy dorms, cold showers, modular classrooms, and food prepared in a weenie-wagon.*

In January, 1978, ground-breaking ceremonies for the Commons were held. Then the rains hit. That winter began the longest rainy season on record and construction was halted until May. The Commons plainly would not be ready by the fall. Modular buildings were obtained to handle dormitory needs. Now additional units would be necessary to handle classroom, chapel, and food service.

When school ended in June, the College moved the furniture, equipment, books, and records into storage containers held in a barn on the Ferndale Ranch. The Doheny Hacienda served as the school's administrative offices. (Eventually, it would become the residence of President McArthur and his wife, Marilyn.)

Kitchen needs presented special problems. Converting a modular unit into a kitchen facility was cost-prohibitive. Instead, a "corn-dog stand," the kind used at county fairs, was rented for that purpose.

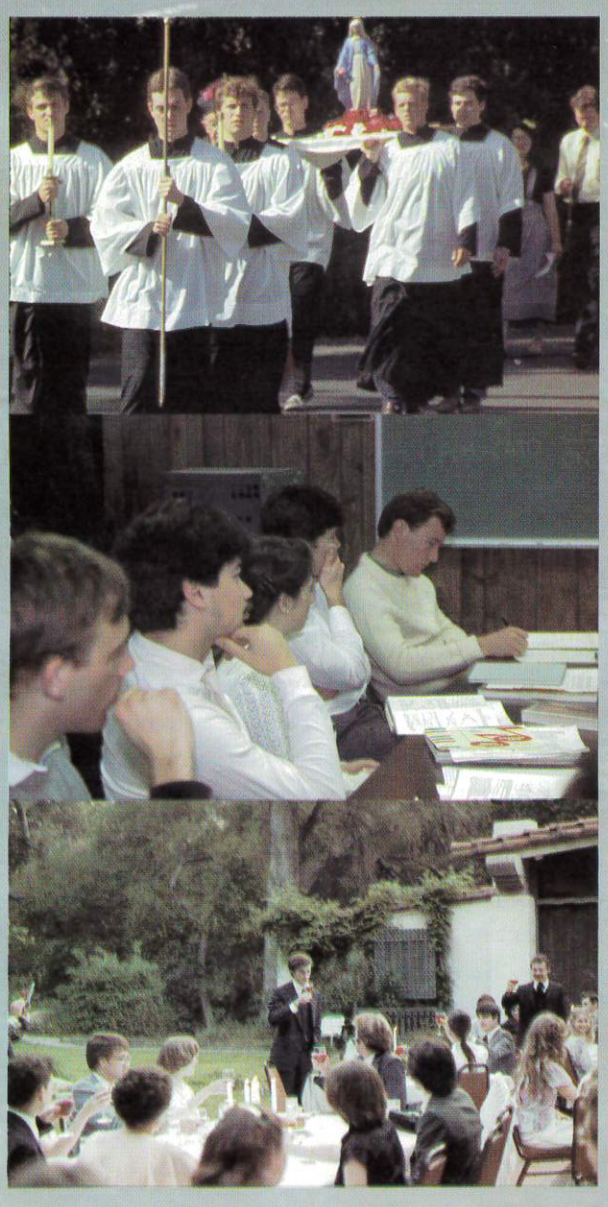
***– A Not-So-Grand Opening***

Work proceeded at a frantic pace throughout the summer, but by September, when school was to open, the modular dormitories had not arrived. Students were called and advised that the opening would be delayed. Indeed, two more extension dates were given. Finally, on the last day of October, Halloween, school opened. But not without a few scares.

On the Friday before the Monday that school was to open, College attorney Joseph Kern was still negotiating with county inspectors, aiming to secure temporary permits to open the premises. A worker drove over a fire hydrant, causing a flood over much of the campus. On opening day, two of the modular dormitories were still being put together. Electricity remained unconnected. Hot water was unavailable. Noisy outdoor generators supplied power for lights only. Several girls had to live in the Hacienda until the last of the modular dormitories was completed two weeks later.

School thus opened, classes resumed, and learning commenced. A mood of good cheer prevailed in spite of flimsy dorms, cold showers, modular classrooms, and food prepared in a weenie-wagon.

But then the rains hit. Again. Construction on the Commons was delayed. Boxes of books stored in wooden shipping crates were nearly destroyed by rain and mildew. The dirt field on which the campus was situated turned to thick mud. Plywood covered paths between dormitories and classrooms. There was no other place to walk. And for weeks on end it was cold and gray. Hearty souls were they who endured. One could not blame the two freshmen who bolted, never to return. What *is* surprising is that so many stayed.







***– A New Spring***

By May, the Commons was completed and Most Reverend Thaddeus Shubsda, Auxiliary Bishop of Los Angeles (and later, Bishop of Monterey), presided over ceremonies to dedicate the new building under the patronage of St. Joseph. (The tribute to St. Joseph was one of thanksgiving; Dr. McArthur had invoked the saint's intercession for the acquisition of the property, even burying a St. Joseph medal on the grounds during one of his early visits.)

By then, too, lawns had been seeded and were green with life. Walkways were paved. Tennis and basketball courts were added. Feast days were celebrated. Dances and parties were enjoyed. And the life of learning continued.

And none of these hardships seemed to matter to the 24 seniors who graduated that year. More than half (13) went on to graduate school. Five of those went to law school, three to Notre Dame Law School. Nine went into teaching, two at the college or university level (including one, Dr. Sean Collins, who has since returned to the College as a tutor). Two went to nursing school, two into political or Church organizations, and two to the seminary. (One classmate left early to become a priest.) And so far, five children of graduates of this class have become or are students at the College.

The general form of the campus remained unchanged for ten more years, until 1989, when a permanent women's dormitory was added. To be sure, other struggles would follow. But by now, at least, the College had a permanent home and the potential to grow. And classes like the first class to graduate during that rough year of relocation would follow.


*Next Issue: Part III – Toward Permanency.*

## *The College Board of Governors*
### *Member in Profile:*
### *Ed Mills*

Ed Mills is a believer. He didn't use to be. Back in 1975, the idea of sending his children to a start-up Catholic liberal arts college in California was unsettling to the man who had founded what would become the nation's 18th largest chemical distribution company. But four of his children are now Thomas Aquinas College graduates, and he is an enthusiastic member of the Board of Governors.

Ed was born and raised in chemicals, as it were. His father worked at the Shell Oil refinery in Roxana, Illinois, a company town in downstate Illinois that so dominated the 1,200 souls who lived there that even the high school was known as the "Shells."

One summer between his sophomore and junior years of high school, he was working as a counselor at a local Boy Scout Camp. At the staff cookout and hayride to close the camp down for the summer, the young Eagle Scout met a young Catholic girl from nearby Alton, Illinois, Dolores Springman.

Dolores was one of eight children from a devout Catholic family. Ed was an only child from a non-practicing Presbyterian family. Ed and Dolores began dating, rival high-schools apart, over the next two years and through their graduation in 1948. With hopes of becoming a chemist, Ed went to the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana, to pursue studies in chemistry and mathematics. Dolores enrolled at St. Mary's College at Notre Dame. The Catholic example of Dolores and her family left its mark on Ed. By Christmas break in his freshman year he entered the Church.

Dolores left college to teach kindergarten at her parish school back in Alton. In 1950, at the end of his sophomore year of college, Ed and Dolores were married. By his senior year of college, Ed had spent enough time in the laboratory to see that a career there was not for him. He took a job with Shell's Chemical Division as a sales correspondent for the Chicago office. After a year, he then trained at Shell's technical service laboratory in New Jersey, where he acquired a practical knowledge about Shell products, organic chemicals, solvents, resins, and plastics. This was in the post-World War II heyday of chemical development, and Ed was at the heart of the technological boom with a major manufacturer of synthetic chemicals.

*Ed and Dolores Mills*

Ed resumed sales work in Chicago a year later. Then after transfers to Milwaukee and St. Louis, he decided to go into business for himself. It was a big risk, but Dolores, who was then expecting their eighth child, encouraged him to make the leap.

> *The idea of sending his children to a start-up Catholic college was unsettling to the man who had founded what would become the nation's 18th largest chemical distribution company*

They returned to Wisconsin and Ed and Dolores started a chemical distribution business, Milwaukee Solvents and Chemicals, working out of their home. Ed's niche was in fulfilling "rush orders" and in using his knowledge about the products to give him an edge over competition. Dolores would take calls from customers and handle all the orders and bookings. Ed would solicit customers and deliver the orders. "I was changing clothes constantly. I'd be in a business suit with a customer one minute, and then in jeans and work shoes the next, so I could package the products, jump in a truck, and deliver the orders."

Their partnership worked well. After six months, they hired their first employee. After two years, they moved to an outside office. In 1970, they opened a distribution facility in Minneapolis. Four years later, they opened one in Des Moines.

Eventually they diversified into contract manufacturing and made such household items as shampoos, conditioners, bath and floor cleansers, cosmetics, solutions for baby wipes, deionized water, even "teat dip" for dairy farmers. He had also found a niche in reclamation efforts, taking used chemicals and making them reusable through chemical processing. His customers included industry giants such as American Can Corporation, Minnesota Mining, S.C. Johnson, Valspar, and Pittsburgh Paint & Glass.

Meanwhile, as chairman of the board and CEO of Milsolv Companies, Mills had become an industry leader. He was President of the Wisconsin Paint and Coatings Association and Director of the Affiliated Chemical Group, an insurance association.

In 1991, Mills built a plant to make fuel-grade ethyl alcohol. By 1998, his company (now known as Milsolv Companies) had grown to 160 employees and was doing $112 million in business with active business concerns in Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa. Dolores was with him every step of the way. "She's been the best business partner I've ever had."

But this man of business and technical work had little interest in Catholic liberal education until he started seeing the effects it had on his children and met their friends. Over time, he became a fervent advocate of Thomas Aquinas College and in 1992 joined its board of governors. (He previously served as a director of the Wisconsin Federation of Independent Colleges.)

Ed and Dolores have ten children, four of whom are graduates of the College: Julie Mills Teichert (1979), Anne Mills Miller (1980), Jim Mills (1981), and John Mills (1988). In 1998, Ed sold the business and retired. Ed and Dolores now live half-time in Wisconsin and half-time in Southern California. Ed is a Knight, and Dolores a Lady, in the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, a distinguished Catholic fraternal society. He has been a member of the Knights of Columbus all his adult life, and was a parish council member at St. Peter's Church in Slinger, Wisconsin. Ed and Dolores also own a small Catholic bookstore in Milwaukee, Catholic Books & Gifts.

## An Interview with Ed Mills

*Q. How did your children come to attend the College?*

Dolores was the first to become aware of it. Back in the early 1970s, she was staffing a booth at a Catholic conference in Minneapolis next to a fellow who was staffing a booth from Thomas Aquinas College. That fellow was Dennis Koller, who was then the College's Admissions Director. They got to talking and Dolores became very interested in the school. Our daughter, Julie, had just finished nursing school and was on a one-year waiting list for admission to St. Louis University Medical School.

Dolores suggested to Julie that, since she had to wait a year to get into medical school, she might as well spend the year out in California at Thomas Aquinas College. Julie took her up on it. She stayed all four years. The irony is, that while she never did go on to medical school, she met and married a fellow student at the College who did, Dr. Jonathan Teichert [class of '76].

*Q. And other of your children followed her?*

Julie would come home during the breaks and talk about her experience there. That interested three other of my children, Anne, Jim, and John. They could see that she was getting something interesting and unique.

*Q. What was your reaction to this at the time?*

I wasn't completely sold on it. I had spent all of my life in a technical industry and I had concerns about the practical value of this education. I thought, sure, it might be fine to sit around and talk philosophy, but I couldn't really see how one might get a job doing that.

*Q. How did you come to change your views about this?*

As time went on, I could see the effect this education was having on my children's lives. Also, I met a fair number of their schoolmates. Our house was centrally-located in the midwest and at the holidays we often had a dozen or so students stopping by. I was always very impressed with these students.

One time, I recall, I came home and found a group of them having an intense philosophical conversation in our living room. I was very impressed, not only with how they expressed themselves, but how earnest they were about the intellectual life. I eventually began to see that this was the norm among them.

*Ed and Dolores Mills at their 50th Wedding Anniversary last August with their ten children and forty grandchildren.*

I started thinking, too, that although I had taken all sorts of mathematics and technical courses in college, I certainly wasn't using any of this knowledge, and frankly, hadn't thought about that material in ages. And yet, I was able to build a successful business. So I thought, it couldn't hurt to have my kids get such a classical education. They'd still be able to pursue diverse employment options or advanced education.

*Q. But you eventually became an enthusiastic supporter?*

Oh, sure! I started to appreciate that the skills they were learning, the ability to think, to start from principles, was something they could take with them anywhere in life and do anything they wanted to do. The skills you acquire at Thomas Aquinas College will stay with you for life. Plus, I've come to see that you're on this earth for such a limited time. You really have to make the most out of it and pursue those things in life that are infinitely valuable. This education has given my kids such a deeper appreciation for their faith. As a parent, it's been a beautiful thing to behold.

*Q. What are your children doing now?*

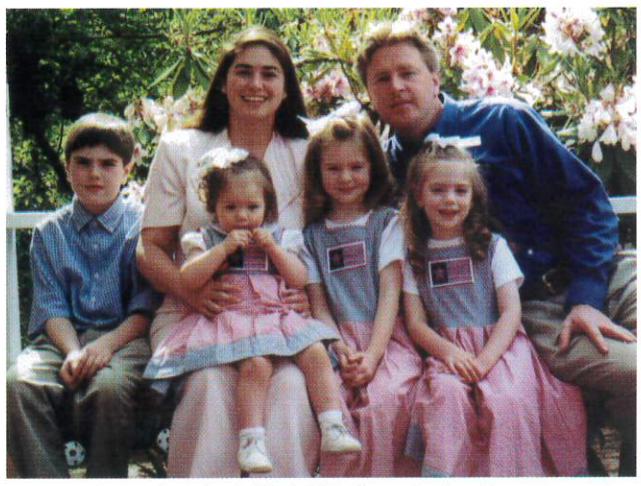
Julie, I mentioned earlier, is a home-schooling mother of eight children. Her oldest son, Henry, begins his first year at the College this fall. Jim works for one of my former companies, Brenntag, in Minneapolis, where he's the marketing rep for fuel-grade ethyl alcohol. He and his wife have one child. My daughter Anne, is married living in Maryland and is home-schooling her four children; she taught school before getting married. My son, John, is single, and is a sales rep at a camera store and does free-lance photography.

*Q. Have you been surprised by the school's impact?*

Yes. I never would have guessed that the College would receive such a high degree of recognition and have its fame spread throughout the country. This is a very big country and you wouldn't think that 40-some graduates a year would make much difference. But they do. The College has become the powerhouse of Catholic liberal arts colleges and you can definitely see the effect its graduates are having on society and the Church. Reminds me of that song, "Start me with ten who are stout-hearted men and I'll soon give you ten-thousand more." Love of God is the heart of Thomas Aquinas College and love of God grows there.

# Alumni Profile

## *David O'Reilly ('87): Liberally-Educated Wine-Maker*



*David and Angelica (neé Ellis) O'Reilly with their best vineyard – cultivation of which began after graduation, he in '87, she in '88.*

"I like to tell people that I got involved in the business to follow an Irishman's dream," said David O'Reilly (Class of '87). "I wanted to earn a living by drinking!" However much this native son of Ireland may enjoy his trade, one thing is clear: commercial wine-making is a sober business. And another thing is clear: he is doing it right.

O'Reilly is producing wine that is among the best in the world and in demand by the priciest restaurants from New York to San Francisco. His first vintage of a zinfandel was rated one of the top 50 wines in the world. Most of his wines fetch over $100 a bottle in premium restaurants. His wines are frequently extolled in publications such as *Wine Advocate, Wine Spectator,* and *Wine Enthusiast. Avalon of Oregon,* a Pacific Northwest wine and gourmet guide, calls him "a guy to watch – a star in the making."

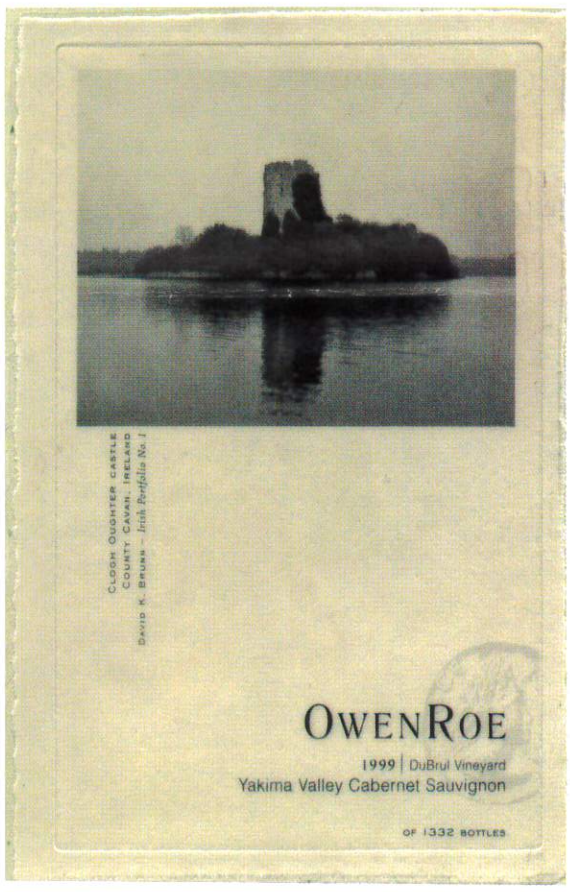
His wine is so exclusive, he doesn't even market by conventional means. Wine connoisseurs come to him. Like James Pipkin, who hosts wine-tasting events for internationally-recognized connoisseurs at one of the world's most exclusive high-end venues the Metropolitan Club in Washington, D.C. Pipkin stumbled on his wines at a wine bar in Portland and later invited O'Reilly back to a tasting where his wines were enthusiastically received. Pipkin says O'Reilly's wines have "unusual concentration and intensity of flavor. They are products that a knowledgeable perfectionist would wish to make, with little regard for his bottom line. They are the kind of wines I would like to make and share with friends, if I had the talent and skill to do so."

To all this acclaim, O'Reilly says, "I really don't care about the ratings; I care about the taste." He has no glossy brochure, not even a business card. He sells out a year's worth of product within a few days of release, and enjoys the luxury of selling to whomever he wants.

So how did such success come to a graduate of a classical liberal arts program? "Well, a few years of experience, a bit of an acquired taste, and a dose of common sense," he shrugs.

O'Reilly initially planned to get in the business by conventional means – attending a top graduate school in wine-making, getting a degree in enology (the technical word for the study of it), working a few years in a winery, and then waiting for a break. He skipped the first step.

On graduation from the College, he applied to, and was accepted into one of the world's leading enology programs at the University of California-Davis, with the condition that he take some prerequisite courses in chemistry. But before starting the program, he thought it would be wise to work a harvest at a winery to see whether the lifestyle was for him.


*O'Reilly's world-class wines, retailing at over $100 a bottle in the nation's finest restaurants, are made in Oregon's Willamette and Walla Walla valleys with care "from the soil to the table." "They are the kind of wines I would like to make and share with friends, if I had the talent and skill to do so," says internationally-recognized wine connoisseur James Pipkin, who organizes tasting events at such high-end venues as Washington, D.C.'s Metropolitan Club.*

He worked at a small winery in Southern California and asked for the worst jobs he could get. He wanted to see the business from the ground up. He worked the cellar, scrubbed the barrels, labeled the cases. On his first day there, he got to see the wine-maker in action, a fellow with double degrees in chemistry and biology who had all the learning necessary to produce high-quality wines.

The wine-maker brought O'Reilly through the cellar and had him remove the bungs on each barrel to smell for off-aromas. "You know you have a problem," the winemaker advised, "if your wine smells like $#*!" O'Reilly was stunned. Why do you need college degrees to figure that out? he wondered. He started observing that many of the great wine-makers were people who relied not on chemistry, but on their sense of taste and common sense. He aspired to do the same. He declined to attend the UC-Davis program.

While at the winery, O'Reilly began studying grapes, ground, geography, and climate. He talked with vintners, harvesters, retailers. He also went to the owners with some marketing suggestions. They tried them out. In short order, he moved three years of back inventory. They offered him the lead marketing job. He declined. He agreed to help in marketing, but only if he could continue working with the wines in the cellar. He became a novice wine-maker.

O'Reilly was particularly drawn to the Pacific Northwest. "I loved the climate, the terrain, the forestation," he said. "It's simply beautiful." He thought at the time that it would offer optimum growing conditions for pinot noir, a wine he particularly liked.

He found that Oregon's Willamette Valley had recently been tested and promised to be one of the prime growing areas in the world. The climate is comparable to the prime growing areas in Europe. Summers are cool, the rainy season comes close to harvest, and certain hillside soils are sparse – perfect for grape-growing and not much else. But the same reasons, he observed, made the growing conditions particularly challenging. "Oregon wines throughout most of the 80s and early 90s had amazingly mixed results. One year, you'd find a wine that would be among the best in the world; the following year, it would be just awful."

He liked the style of the vintners there. He found they relied more on common sense than on technology or capital. "They paid attention to health of the soil. They'd walk through the vineyard and scrutinize the crop. They'd use natural methods in the vineyards and for extracting greater flavor, such as cold-soaking the grape juice and red skins several days before inoculation with yeast."

Eventually, this style would put Oregon on the map for having among the finest wine producers in the world. O'Reilly saw this in advance and wanted to try his hand at it, too.

He scouted out wineries and in 1992 landed a job with Elk Cove Vineyards. "There was something I really liked about the place; it had this neat old style about it," he said. The winery was struggling financially at the time and backed up on vintages.

He took over marketing efforts and worked as a wine-making consultant. In six and a half years he helped Elk Cove move from 5,500 to 22,000 cases of wine a year; from gross sales of $240,000 to $2 million.

But as part of the deal, he also secured privileges to use the winery to produce wine under his own label. He then produced a wine from 100 year old vines under the *Sineann* (pronounced "Shen-ay-yan") label, Gaelic for Ireland's River Shannon. To give an ancient air to it, he picked a woodcut of St. Dominic for the label and put a red wax seal on the neck of the bottle.

The wine was an instant hit. Using his marketing connections, he hand-picked people whom he knew would write about him in promotional literature. Then he went to certain wine buyers at pricey restaurants. They all liked what they saw (rather, tasted).

The 150-200 cases of wine he initially produced sold in an instant. He had produced all he could, given the vineyard space he was leasing from area growers. But he wanted to grow slowly, maintain a positive cash flow, and above all, preserve a reputation for excellence.

In 1998, he left Elk Cove to produce wines on his own. The contacts have grown, along with his reputation. The excellence has endured. With his partner, Peter Rosback, he now produces under the *Sineann* label as well as under the label of *Owen Roe*, the name of a 17th Century Irish patriot. But his production is still relatively small, up to only 7,000 cases a year, and he still produces his wine from leased facilities. By next year, he intends to produce them at his own facilities in a converted barn. Currently, his leased vineyards stretch from the Willamette Valley to the Walla Walla Valley, depending on the type of grape he's cultivating.

In addition to the pinot noir, he's producing pinot gris, syrah, merlot, cabernet sauvignon, and zinfandel. He's also producing white- and red-blended table wines, under the name, *Abbott's Table*. "From the soil to the table" is his company motto.

Born in Belfast, Ireland, the 7th of 12 children, O'Reilly is one of three brothers to graduate from the College. His brother, Paul, is a tutor there. O'Reilly credits his success to his experience at the College. "At TAC, we're always taught to look to first principles. I just try to do the same here. I ask, Why is this wine better than that? What are other wine-makers doing to make their wines better? It's this sort of analytical approach that the best wine-makers use, and it's the same approach I was taught at TAC." He is also grateful to his former tutor, Marc Berquist – "one of the best palates I ever met, and in one of the most humble men I ever met" – with helping to form his interest and appreciation for fine wine.

He also found another interest at the College, Angelica Ellis, who graduated in the class behind him and whom he later married. She homeschools their four children, Dominic (11), Brigid (7), Moira Jane (5), and Marie Therese (2).

"This is the vineyard I'm most proud of," he winks. With his fine taste, he should know.

# A Brief History of Thomas Aquinas College

## Peter L. DeLuca III: Founding Catalyst

"This College simply wouldn't exist if it weren't for Peter DeLuca." Founding President Dr. Ronald McArthur is direct and insistent when he describes the role Peter DeLuca played in the founding of Thomas Aquinas College. "I was the guy in the suit who would go talk, but Peter was the one who found me people and places to go to."

Peter L. DeLuca III – founding member, senior tutor, business administrator, college fundraiser, building supervisor – has done it all in his thirty-three year stint with the College. But as DeLuca tells it, it all started with McArthur.

In 1961 DeLuca was a junior at St. Mary's College, Moraga, when he was captivated by the instruction of his new ethics and philosophy professor. DeLuca had already come under the influence of McArthur's fellow Laval-trained Thomistic philosophers there, brothers Duane and Marc Berquist, and Br. Edmund Dolan.

A moment with Br. Edmund stands out in particular. "He was making bed-check rounds one night around 11:00 p.m. He came in and talked with my roommate and me about the disintegration of Western Civilization. He started with William of Occam and finished a sustained lecture about two hours later. It was a moment of realization for us," he said. McArthur's lectures then drove those points home.

DeLuca came to see that the roots of this disintegration were intellectual, not political, and that the remedy lay in education. The young student then decided he wanted to spend his life helping to defend and restore Western Civilization.

Politics had been his primary interest. He helped launch a conservative club and was active in the Young Republicans. He organized a large event to bring William F. Buckley to campus. But through the influence of McArthur and colleagues, educational matters were to became DeLuca's primary concern.

Following graduation in 1963, DeLuca married Kay Roberts, a student from the San Francisco College for Women he had met in his junior year. He also became the Western Regional Director for the Intercollegiate Studies Institute, where he coordinated speakers and events on educational matters at Western colleges. Two years later, he became ISI's National Director in Philadelphia, but was forced to return to Southern California the following year due to a family illness. There he worked first as a personal assistant to Henry Salvatori, the oil magnate and ISI benefactor, and then again as ISI's Western Director.

Throughout this time, he remained in touch with his professors at St. Mary's and later, with McArthur's projects within the Great Books program there. DeLuca sought to give McArthur's views an airing. He arranged to have McArthur speak at the western meeting of the Philadelphia Society, an ISI spin-off group he had recently helped form.

He then cultivated interest in McArthur's prospective talk. Among those he interested was Doyle Swain, a fundraiser for what was then Pepperdine College. Swain met with McArthur, and on hearing news that his prospects at St. Mary's had proven fruitless, persuaded the skeptical McArthur to think about starting his own college.

> **"This College simply wouldn't exist if it weren't for Peter DeLuca."**
> **– Founding President Dr. Ronald McArthur**

ISI President E. Victor Millione then permitted DeLuca to help McArthur on ISI time. After McArthur and Berquist produced a draft of the new college's founding document, DeLuca had it typed and printed. He sent it to Henry Salvatori and persuaded him to meet McArthur about it. Salvatori gave them $10,000, the first seed money for the College.

The group then formed a corporation and used some of that money to host a November 1968 conference on the founding document, from which *National Review* columnist Russell Kirk wrote an endorsement the following March. When the opportunity arose to establish a joint campus with the Dominican College of San Rafael in June 1969, DeLuca left ISI and became Thomas Aquinas College's original employee, opening an office in an unused classroom.

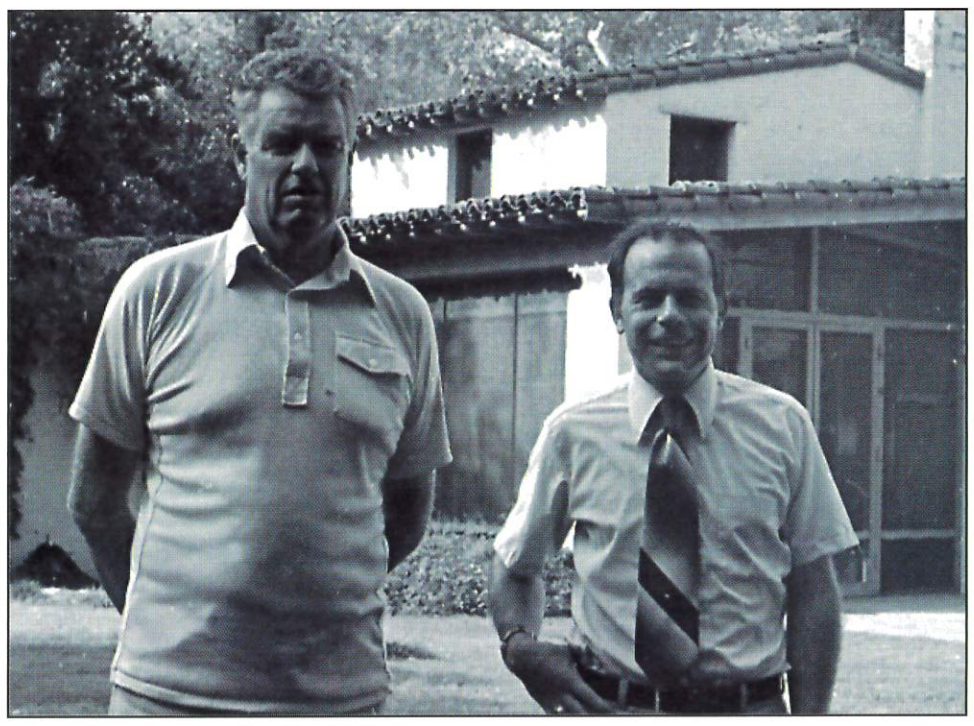
He helped develop a fundraising brochure and helped McArthur meet potential benefactors. He also helped organize the kick-off fundraising dinner, and through various connections, engaged the celebrated Archbishop Fulton Sheen and publisher L. Brent Bozell as speakers.

Since then, DeLuca has been at the center of the College's development. He often looks back in amazement. "If we had known then how difficult it would be, we probably never would have tried it. But we could see over the years the Hand of Divine Providence at work. We've always been conscious that this was God's work because of the many things God did to make it happen. The whole is far greater than the sum of our meager efforts."

Over the past thirty years, he has worn almost every hat in administration, in charge at various times of the College's business affairs, finances, fundraising, and development. Probably the hardest aspect of his job, back in the early years, he says, was trying to run the business office without enough money. "For too many years, we were unable to pay our bills promptly. This is not something I did in my personal life, and I didn't like to do that for the College." "Eventually," he says, "everyone was paid and we never missed payroll. And now, thankfully, we have maintained some measure of financial stability, and operate within our budget. Our biggest challenge now is to raise enough funds to complete the campus and fund our endowment. I'm confident that will happen soon."

He is currently Vice President for Finance and Administration and is also responsible for all building and construction projects. And as a senior tutor, he has taught more than half the courses in the curriculum.

In spite of his life-long contributions, DeLuca sees himself more as a beneficiary. Three of his six children have graduated from the College and one is a student now. "I've been a customer as well as a producer. I have all the same good feelings that other parents have because of that. And also, it's been a tremendous honor to spend my life doing something so worthwhile and seeing it work. I feel as if I've been able to strike a blow in favor of Western Civilization after all."



*McArthur and DeLuca at the Hacienda in 1978, shortly after the move to the new campus.*

## Donors Critical to the Founding of Thomas Aquinas College

*Summa Cum Laude Donors*

Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence J. Barker
Mrs. Francis E. Browne
Mr. and Mrs. Carl N. Karcher
Mr. Henry Salvatori
Dan Murphy Foundation
DeRance Foundation
Ralph M. Parsons Foundation

*Magna Cum Laude Donors*

Mr. Philip C. Adams
Mr. and Mrs. F. J. Baumgarten
Ms. Anita M. Dumovich
Mr. and Mrs. John B. Friedrich
Rev. Msgr. John Gallagher
Mr. Ray Heffernan
Mr. and Mrs. John R. Kiely

# A Brief History of Thomas Aquinas College

## John Neumayr: Scholar-Athlete-Founder

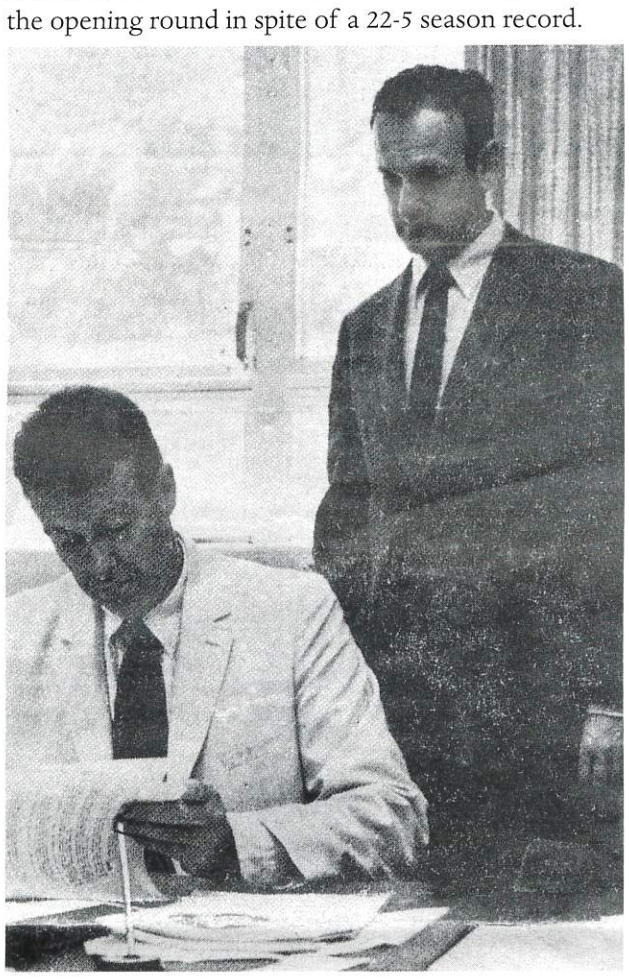
If founding a college is a Herculean task, then how fitting that one of the College's founders would be an outstanding athlete-turned-philosopher.

Dr. John Neumayr, a four-year standout basketball player at Notre Dame, knew there were higher things in life than 10-foot circular rims. But he never anticipated that pursuing life's great ideas would lead him to the founding of Thomas Aquinas College.

Born in St. Paul, Minnesota, Neumayr lived in and around San Francisco from the age of 10. The second oldest of four children, he always liked sports growing up. He excelled at basketball in junior high and high school, and, at the Jesuits' perennial powerhouse, St. Ignatius Prep, was selected to the all-city team in his senior year.

He also excelled at track and field. As a sophomore, he set the San Francisco City record in the high jump. His leap of 6' 5" under the old "tuck and roll" method was thought by the legendary Stanford Coach Dink Templeton to be a world record for a 15-year-old and stood at least as a city record until Johnny Mathis delayed his singing career to break it a few years later. (Surprisingly, Neumayr never improved on the mark. "My build changed and I gained 20-30 pounds," he lamented.)

Neumayr was delighted when, in 1948, Notre Dame recruited him for basketball and track. He had been hoping to go there anyhow. As a 6' 4" small forward, Neumayr joined a team that remained in the nation's Top 20 throughout his four years. Not until his senior year did Notre Dame elect to play in the post-season NCAA tournament, and when it did, it lost in the opening round in spite of a 22-5 season record.



*McArthur and Neumayr, as pictured in the October 24, 1969,* St. Mary's Collegian, *under the caption, "Three Integrated Profs Defect to Start Thomas Aquinas College."*

But it was during high school that Neumayr fell in love with philosophy. One of his fellow basketball teammates, Cappy Lavin, was a poet and scholar at heart, and the two young men began to see that there was something more permanent than the fleeting things of life. "We had spent a lot of time talking literature and philosophy before we even knew what philosophy was," said Neumayr. (Lavin ended up teaching high school in Marin County; his son, Steve, is head basketball coach at UCLA.)

Neumayr cultivated this interest in philosophy at Notre Dame and, on graduation in 1952, decided to pursue a master's degree in the subject there. He maintained his athletic interests, coaching the freshman basketball team for two years and playing in an exhibition league against visiting professional teams and the Harlem Globetrotters.

He returned to San Francisco uncertain of his interests. He pursued course-work toward a teaching credential, considered practicing law, and even tested a religious vocation at the Dominican novitiate.

During this two-year odyssey, his sister Mary introduced him to one of her favorite teachers at the San Francisco College for Women (known as "Lone Mountain College"). Mary had guessed that her brother and her philosophy instructor, Dr. Ronald McArthur, would get along well. She guessed right. The two hit it off from the start. They played a lot of tennis and talked a lot of philosophy.

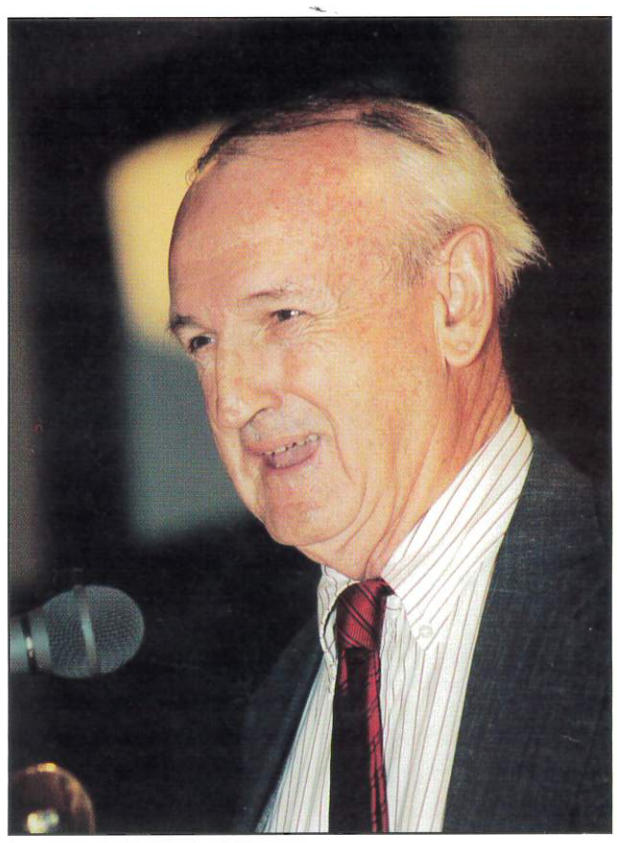
**The four-year standout basketball player at Notre Dame never anticipated that pursuing life's great ideas would lead him to the founding of Thomas Aquinas College.**

McArthur then joined the faculty of St. Mary's, which featured an Integrated Liberal Arts Program similar to the Great Books curriculum at St. John's College. McArthur, who taught in the philosophy department as well as in the Integrated Program, urged Neumayr to hurry and get his philosophy degree at Laval University, with the hope that the two of them might teach in the program there.

Neumayr thus studied at McArthur's *alma mater* under his mentor, the esteemed Thomist, Charles DeKoninck. But by the time Neumayr obtained his doctorate in 1962, winds of change were blowing at St. Mary's and McArthur counseled Neumayr to stay away. The program was losing its moorings under new management.

For four years, then, Neumayr taught at nearby University of Santa Clara. There he found a soul-mate in young philosophy instructor, Marc Berquist, whose brother Duane he had come to know at Laval. During this time he also met Bridget Cameron, an Oxford University graduate from England working on a Master's in American Literature at the University of California at Berkeley. She finished the Master's and they married in 1963.

But winds of change were blowing in Santa Clara, too. Neumayr and Berquist became witness to the dis-



integration of its Thomistic-based philosophy department. In 1966, they both migrated to St. Mary's when, under different management, it appeared there was hope for the reformation of the program there.

But those hopes were soon dashed. Two years later, a new administration decided to restructure the program and Neumayr was advised that his teaching contract would not be renewed. Anticipating this demise, McArthur, Neumayr, Berquist, and others began discussing plans to establish a new college.

Again, Neumayr's sister became a linking agent. Hoping to help find the college a home, Mary introduced her brother to the Dominican Sisters who were facing a loss of students at their all-women's college in San Rafael when the all-male local Catholic colleges decided to go co-ed. McArthur and Neumayr pitched their project to the Sisters who agreed to let them open offices at their campus – an arrangement that proved to be short-lived.

Thus in the fall of 1969, Neumayr came as the first Dean of Thomas Aquinas College. He assisted McArthur and Berquist in writing the College's founding document, and drafted its first Student Bulletin of Information. He also traveled with McArthur to give talks about the College and to recruit students. And when the College finally opened for classes in 1971, Neumayr taught.

Neumayr remained Dean until 1981, and in addition to his full-time teaching responsibilities, has served as vice-president and board member of the College since its founding. Two of his seven children have graduated from the College (Mary Bridget in '86 and Jane in '98). His youngest, Anne, begins next fall.

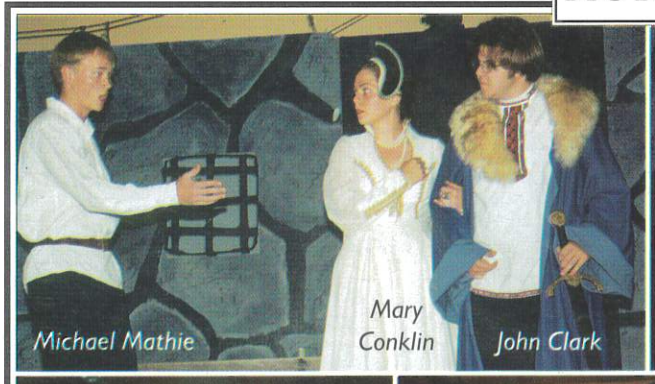
Neumayr looks back on all these years with characteristic humility. "When you consider the modest talents and efforts we brought to bear in founding the College, you have to conclude that this was God's project, not ours." Score another win for him.

## From the Founding of the College Through 1990

Mr. and Mrs. Edward P. Martin
Dr. and Mrs. Ronald F. McArthur
Mr. and Mrs. Edward N. Mills
Mr. and Mrs. Francis J. Montgomery
Mr. Richard L. Noble
Mr. Frederick J. Ruopp
Mr. and Mrs. John E. Schaeffer
Mr. Chauncey D. Stillman
Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd C. Strite
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas P. Sullivan
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph A. Wynne
Dr. and Mrs. Henry J. Zeiter

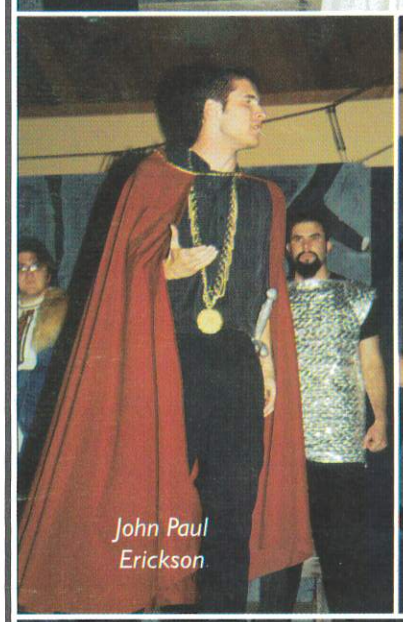
The Andersen Foundation
The Fritz B. Burns Foundation
The Fletcher Jones Foundation
The Drum Foundation
The Marcellus L. Joslyn Foundation
Dr. Scholl Foundation
Louisa Watson Trust

## A ST. GENESIUS PLAYERS PRODUCTION

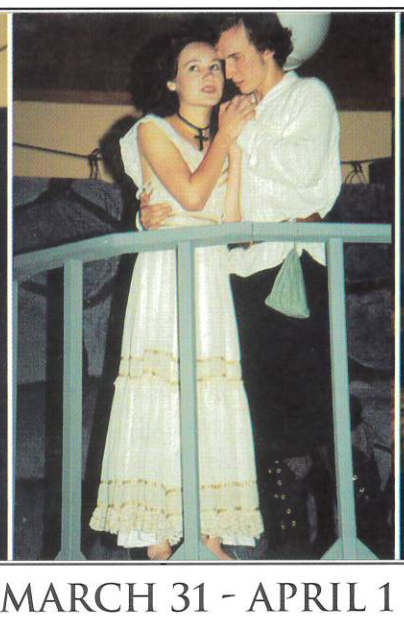





## ROMEO AND JULIET

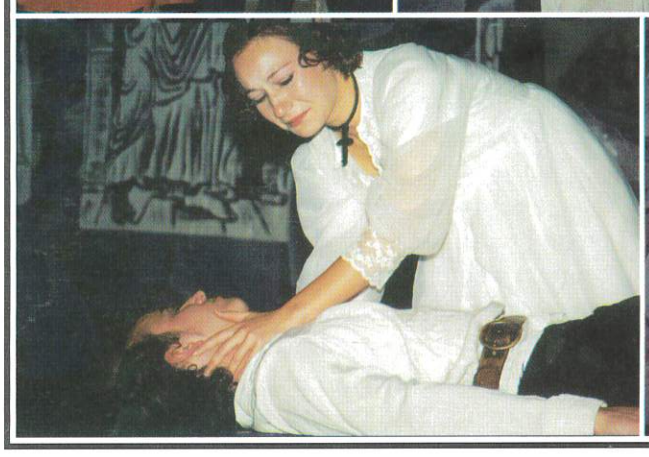


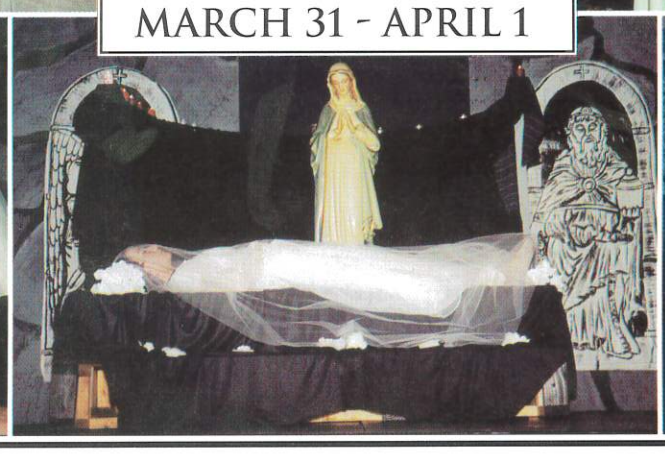






## MARCH 31 - APRIL 1





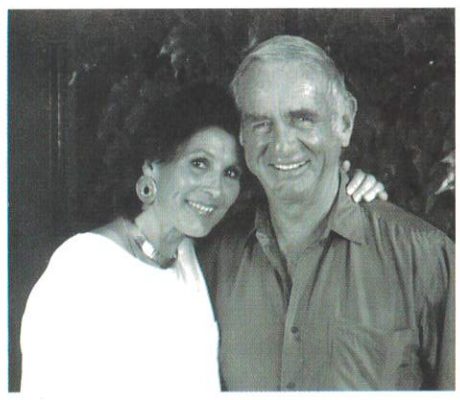
---

## YOUR ESTATE –

YOU BUILT IT,

YOU PRESERVED IT,

BESTOW IT WITH CARE . . .



*Mr. & Mrs. Jim Barrett*

INVEST A BEQUEST IN THOMAS AQUINAS COLLEGE.

*For helpful information on making a bequest in your Will, call John Q. Masteller, Director of Development, at 800 - 634 - 9797.*

THE LEGACY SOCIETY

---

### *Calendar of Events*

| | |
|---|---|
| Great Books Summer Seminar #1 | July 20 - 22 |
| Great Books Summer Seminar #2 | July 27 - 29 |
| High School Summer Seminar | July 29 - August 10 |
| Convocation Day, Classes Begin | September 10 |
| 30th Anniversary Gala Event | September 29 |

805/525-4417 • FAX 805/525-0620

www.thomasaquinas.edu



THOMAS AQUINAS COLLEGE
10000 N. OJAI ROAD
SANTA PAULA, CA 93060-9622
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED