

A Summary of One Hundred Years of Withrow History

1920

In September 1919 the new East High School opened to students in grades nine through 12. There were no clocks in the Tower, no lockers in the halls and although the cafeteria was up and running, students had to bring their own knives and forks. The football stadium was incomplete and there was no football field so the fledgling Tigers had to play all their games away. Mr. Edmund D. Lyon, who had been principal at both Woodward and Hughes High Schools, was named principal of the new East High. Mr. Lyon remained as principal until his retirement in 1933.

1921

Students at East High publish and print a bi-weekly student newspaper, **The Tower News**. It is the only public high school newspaper in the City of Cincinnati. Containing articles about athletics, school clubs and activities, and stories and poems written by students, the paper also had an agricultural report. Agricultural subjects were part of the East High curriculum at that time. The large Wulsin estate, which adjoined East High on the west, was classified as a working farm until its sale in 1967 and the construction of the Regency high rise and townhouses.

1922

The completed football stadium was opened for the East High vs Hughes High game in October 1921. 8,000 people attended the game, the largest high school attendance ever in Cincinnati. The stadium was built to hold approximately 10,000 so some seats were still available. The rivalry with Hughes, which many East High students would have attended but for the creation of East High, was paramount. Hughes won 32-14.

1923

One of the graduates in the class of 1923 was the talented Ruth Reeves. A pioneer in television later known as Ruth Lyons, she hosted the 50-50 Club every weekday from noon to 1:30 in the 1950's and 60's. Televised throughout the Midwest, Ruth and her show was immensely popular and advertisers lined up at her door. She was also a talented song writer. She is remembered today as being a precursor to such talented TV personalities as Oprah and Ellen. Ruth's favorite charity, the Ruth Lyons Christmas Fund, continues today raising money to help sick children in hospital.

1924

Once again the East High-Hughes High football game was to be the big fall event. However, Hughes students sneaked onto the East High campus and painted the bridge and tower with red H's and pro Hughes slogans. The game was called off and the high school championship for that fall remained undetermined. Six Hughes students were suspended, two were transferred to Woodward and approximately 85 other Hughes boys who had taken part in the vandalism had to pay for the cleanup.

1925

East High has now been renamed by the Board of Education for its president, Dr. John Murphy Withrow. Dr. Withrow was a teacher before becoming a prominent physician and as a member of the Board had been responsible for obtaining the money for the improvement of Cincinnati's public schools. Dr. Withrow's interest in architecture is a main reason that the tower, and the bridge, were built in addition to what was then a state of the art high school. Thanks to Dr. Withrow our high school has long been considered one of the most beautiful high schools in the country.

1926

Principal Edmund Lyon starts an Art League at Withrow. Students who join contribute a nickel and with the collected money the league bought and commissioned works of art for the school. New murals were painted in the lunchroom and in some classrooms and over the years many paintings by prominent Cincinnati artists were purchased. A few paintings remain at Withrow in the hall outside the alumni Center but most have been appropriated by the Board of Education and lent to the Art Museum and the Cincinnati Museum Center. Unfortunately, many of the paintings paid for by Withrow students were sold by the Board and several have recently sold on the open market at hefty sums. Most of the lunchroom and classroom murals have been painted over or destroyed.

1927

In 1927 the Industrial Arts building, formerly located on the east side of the football field where the faculty parking lot is now, housed the Automotive Trade School. The IA building was not constructed to house such a school and the automobile repair program was very popular, hence overcrowded. The Board of Education wisely decided to build a new structure and relocate the automotive school along with two other vocational schools. The Cincinnati Automobile Dealers Association helped to find a permanent location to provide adequate space and they provided equipment to bring it up to 1927 standards. The new Automotive Trades School was opened on Iowa Ave. in June 1929.

1928

Up until the 1927-28 school year the middle gym, {now the xxxxx, }was open to the elements. Windows were installed to enclose it and turned this outdoor gym into an indoor facility. Back then the south gym, closest to the main building, was the girls gym. It is now the student lunchroom. The north gym was the boy's gym. The girl's swimming pool was underneath the girls gym, the boys pool underneath the boys. Due to maintenance problems and the fact that neither were built to standard regulation size, both pools have since been filled in and covered over. In this year the tennis courts were also constructed.

1929

Before the age of TV and the internet, radio was king. A Radio Club had been founded at Withrow as early as 1920 where students could build and listen to their own radios. On March 4, 1929 the student body gathered in the auditorium to listen to the live radio broadcast of the inauguration of Herbert Hoover as president of the United States. Later that year, President Hoover visited Cincinnati. School was dismissed at 11:45 so students could see him as his motorcade passed. The students returned for lunch and 6th bell classes.

1930

Seeing that he had a wealth of musical talent at Withrow, the new band director, George Smith, along with the Football coach Nelson Walke, organize the first Withrow Minstrels. Based on the old time minstrel format, the show included skits and jokes along with individual and group musical and novelty numbers. Originally organized to be performed for the annual alumni reunion, the show was such a big hit that an extra performance had to be presented. The Withrow Minstrels ran every year from 1932 to 1965 when Mr. Smith retired. At its height 10,000 tickets would be sold and the show would run for six nights. It was replaced by the Sounds of Withrow.

1931

Girls gym teachers, Miss Helen Taylor and Miss Dorothy Sachs, lead 50 Girl's Athletic Association members on weekend hikes through eastern Cincinnati and northern Kentucky. The first fall hike was over a distance of 8 miles. Subsequent winter and spring hikes were 5 and 10 miles long. The final spring hike, from Kennedy Heights to Red Bank, was 15 miles long. The hikes all began and ended at street car stops so the girls, and the teachers, could return home on public transportation.

1932

The economic Depression, the cause of massive unemployment in the United States, caused enrollment at Withrow and other public schools to increase substantially. Withrow now enrolled almost 3000 students. Many students who would otherwise have dropped out of school to go to work, came back or stayed in school as there was nothing else for them to do.

1933

As the Depression continued, there were fears that the student newspaper Tower News would have to stop publication as many students could no longer afford to spend 5 cents to buy it. Income from advertising had fallen as many merchants could no longer afford to buy space. The price of the Withrow Annual, the yearbook, was halved to \$1.50 but still many went unsold. Several clubs which previously had paid the Annual to publish their pictures could no longer afford the \$10.00 to have their pictures taken.

1934

Mr. Edmund Lyon, the principal since the opening in 1919, retired. Mr. Lyon, who died in 1944, was honored by the Board of Education when Lyon Junior High School in Madisonville was dedicated in 1956. It has since been demolished

and is now the site of John P. Parker Elementary. Mr. Lyon was succeeded at Withrow by Mr. Walter Peoples. He had been the assistant principal since 1919 and he remained as Withrow principal until his death in 1947. Like Mr. Lyon, Mr. Peoples was honored in 1970 by having Walter Peoples Junior High School on Erie Avenue in Hyde Park named for him. That school has since been replaced by Clark Montessori.

1935

A problem at any large school, feeding over 3,000 hungry teenagers every day is quite a challenge. Fortunately, in 1935 Withrow was lucky to have Miss Hazel Fullriede in charge of the lunchroom. During her tenure the Withrow lunchroom had more daily patrons than any other restaurant in Cincinnati. At its height, Miss Fullriede supervised 34 cooks, 2 porters and 60 student helpers. And the food was good as well as nutritious. Miss Fullriede remained at Withrow until 1956 when she was promoted out.

1936

Dramatics was always popular at Withrow. Plays and skits were performed throughout the year at assemblies and in the evening. Membership in Thalian Dramatic Club was by tryouts. Membership in The Withrow Players, new this year, was open to all freshmen and sophomores. The play that Thalian performed in March was so popular that it had a double cast. One cast performed one night, the other cast the next.

1937

The rain and snow in January 1937 caused a massive Ohio River flood. Parts of Cincinnati were under water for 19 days. 100,000 citizens were flooded out of their homes, Schools in low lying areas closed first but when Cincinnati Water Works flooded and electric power went out even Withrow had to close. It was the Friday before exams that Withrow closed for two weeks. When students returned in February they were happy to learn that exams had been cancelled. Many Withrow students volunteered to help flood victims and clean up and repair the damage caused by the largest catastrophe in Cincinnati history.

1938

Not only were the Withrow Minstrels widely anticipated each year, but the Annual Spring Concert featured more classical musical entertainment performed by the student body. Led by musical director Mr. Joseph Surdo, who had been at Withrow since 1919, 1938 was his final year to lead the orchestra and choruses as he retired at the end of the school year. Mr. Surdo, who had been born in Italy, came to the United States at age 5. He attended Woodward High School and the College Conservatory of Music, now part of the University of Cincinnati. A very popular instructor, Mr. Surdo was also notorious for handing out detention slips to wayward students. The Spring Concert ran for two nights and approximately 450 students participated.

1940

The former Industrial Arts building also contained the Withrow power plant. Steam heat was produced by burning coal in the huge furnaces, hence there was a large smokestack belching out fumes right next to the football field. According to Withrow's chief engineer, Mr. Haysbert, it took 1,500 tons of coal per season to heat Withrow. In 1940 that meant it took 15 railroad hopper cars full of coal to keep Withrow students warm over the winter.

1941

The Withrow High School band, under the direction of Mr. George Smith, grew to be the largest and finest high school band in the city. With 130 members in 1940 and up to 148 members in 1941, Mr. Smith declared it to be the largest band in the county. Playing at all football games in the fall, the band also gave concerts at home and elsewhere. The annual Withrow Minstrels, which ran for five nights, was actually a fund raiser for the band.

1942

With the bombing of Pearl Harbor in December 1941, the United States went to war. Because of Cincinnati's prominence in the production of machine tools vital to the war effort and Withrow's proximity to two major plants, instructions for air raid drills were disseminated and practice drills began in January 1942. Humorous accounts of gym students being caught in the showers and having to dress while running to their assigned shelters underlined the

seriousness of keeping out of the way of falling bombs. Needless to say, bombs never fell on Cincinnati but preparedness in wartime was of utmost importance.

1943

With World War II in full swing in Europe and the far east, Withrow students rally behind the war effort. Scrap metal is collected to be melted down and turned into ammunition. Students sell and buy war bonds to help finance the defense of the United States. The Victory Corps helps support our soldiers fighting the enemy abroad with mail and needed supplies. Girls groups make first-aid kits for the Red Cross. The 1943 Withrow Annual, "The New World is Ours", is dedicated to winning the war.

1944

Many Withrow students leave school before graduating to join the armed forces as World War II continues. Several male teachers leave to join up or are drafted to serve. Some report back to Withrow of their activities in the armed forces and the letters are published in Tower News. Other faculty and students volunteer in war related activities such as the Red Cross or contribute to the war effort by growing a "Victory Garden". Withrow students raise enough money to buy a Red Cross Mobile blood donor truck.

1945

The last year of World War II at Withrow continues with difficulty. With most meat and produce in the country going to feed the armed forces, Tower News reports that there has been no ham or chicken in the school cafeteria for two winter months and there are shortages of potatoes, ice cream and sugar. Cakes can only be made every other day. In spite of these and other hardships throughout the war, Withrow students still play sports, put on plays, concerts and the Minstrels. But Tower News continues to run casualty lists of former students killed or injured by the enemy. In total, 109 Withrowites lost their lives in World War II.

1946

With the war over, both students and faculty veterans are welcomed back to Withrow. As things return to normal, more students are drawn to use the Withrow library for research and study. Located on the second floor, the library (now the Alumni Center), has been run by librarian Mary Helen Pooley since its inception in 1919. By 1946 it contained approximately 14,000 books and subscribed to 80 different magazines. Students had to get a pass to access the library but these were liberally distributed and the library was a popular place to read, study, or peruse a magazine. The original chairs and tables from 1919 are still in use today and just as uncomfortable now as they were then.

1947

Withrow was always a popular assignment for student teachers from the University of Cincinnati. As a large comprehensive high school it offered many opportunities for training neophyte teachers. One of the student teachers in the fall of 1946 was Norwood High School graduate Marvin Renshaw who was to teach American History. After graduation from UC, Mr. Renshaw returned to teach full time at Withrow and later became principal of Withrow from 1967 to 1971. In addition to teachers, a popular senior in the class of 1947 was Thomas D'Amico who eventually became principal of Withrow from 1976 to 1980. Mr. Joseph Ayer, principal from 1959 to 1967, also student taught at Withrow in 1941.

1948

For the first time, Withrow football games were to be broadcast on the radio. A recently developed type of radio broadcasting, called FM for "frequency modulation", was revolutionizing the broadcasting industry. To be sponsored by one of Cincinnati's leading department stores, Alms and Doepke (Depp-key), it was expected that some basketball games would also be broadcast. Of course it would be necessary to have an FM radio as up until this time only AM "amplitude modulation" radios were available.

1949

Among the graduates in the class of 1949 was Tom Wesselmann. While not interested in art while at Withrow, after college and the army he went on to study and become a very famous artist in New York City. Famous for his "Pop Art" paintings, collages and sculptures, his painting "Nude No. 48" sold for \$10.7 million at auction in 2008. A retrospective

of his art was held at the Cincinnati Art Museum in 2014. At Withrow he lettered in Golf. He died in 2004 and his name is on the list of Tiger donors in the main hall.

1950

The film "A Day at Withrow" was shown to the PTA and parents. This half hour color film was originally made by student Richard Willey and the Withrow Camera Club in 1941. Originally called "We Go to Withrow" it was silent with narration. Some of the older parts had been replaced with new film made in 1950. It has since been lost.

1951

A Withrow alumnus, cinematographer Robert Surtees wins his first Academy Award from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in Hollywood. He won for his work on the movie "King Solomon's Mines", a biblical epic popular at the time. Two years later he won another cinematography Oscar for "The Bad and the Beautiful", a Hollywood drama, and in 1960 he won his third Oscar for "Ben Hur", another epic motion picture. In total, Mr. Surtees was nominated for the Oscar 16 times. All his movies are available on Netflix. At Withrow, Mr. Surtees lettered in basketball in 1925.

1952

Prior to the 1951-52 school year, students had been graded by numerical grades from 1 to 100. Beginning this year, the ABCDF system was adopted. Also new this school year was a student council at Withrow. Representatives were elected from each home room and at large members were chosen so that each class would have equal representation. It was hoped that student council would foster leadership, scholarship, student responsibility and cooperation between students and faculty. Engendering more school spirit was also a goal for the council.

1953

The 1953 Withrow Annual is the first to have individual pictures of every student in both the senior and junior high schools. In almost all the annuals prior to 1953 the seniors had individual pictures but underclassmen and junior high photos were homeroom group photos. The exception was the 1930 annual where grades 9 through 12 had individual pictures but each junior high class had a group photo.

1954

Enrollment at Withrow drops as 500 former students now attend the new Woodward High School in Bond Hill. Students living in Kennedy Heights, Pleasant Ridge and Bond Hill were shifted to the new school district. Seniors in the class of 1954 were given an option to finish at Withrow or be in the first graduating class at new Woodward. New Woodward was demolished in 2011 and replaced with the Woodward Career Technical High School located on Reading Road in Bond Hill. The original Woodward was the first free public school in Cincinnati opening in Over-the-Rhine in 1831.

1955

Several acts from the Withrow Minstrels, the student variety show held every year since 1932, were featured on television station WCET, the Cincinnati educational channel. WCET is now the PBS channel. Also, later this year, Mr. Lomond Nimmo, a physical education teacher and Cross County and Track coach, hosted a sports related program "Nimmo's Locker" on WCPO, the ABC affiliate station in Cincinnati.

1956

The new band room addition to Withrow is completed and opened for use. Band director George G. Smith had been lobbying for more space for many years and his wishes had finally come to fruition. With 4 practice rooms, 3 equipment rooms, an office and music library, the band room was state of the art for 1956. Located west of the auditorium, the band room addition has since been demolished and is now a parking lot. Other band news for 1956 was that senior Mardee Dinerman was elected band president, the first female band member to hold that position.

1957

A college preparatory program, similar to that taught at Walnut Hills High School, was introduced in Cincinnati's comprehensive high schools. Instead of being required to take Latin in the new junior high program, either French or Spanish was now required. Unlike Walnut Hills, boys were still required to take industrial arts courses in printing,

electricity, metalwork and woodwork and girls were required to take home economics courses in cooking and sewing. Academically, the college preparatory courses were designed to be the same as those taught at Walnut Hills.

1958

A graduate of the class of 1921, Neil H. McElroy is sworn in as United States Secretary of Defense. Appointed by President Dwight D. Eisenhower, Mr. McElroy was also a graduate of Harvard University. He rose through the ranks at Cincinnati's Procter and Gamble Company and in 1948 became its president. As Secretary of Defense Mr. McElroy stepped up missile development and production as it was believed that our "Cold War" enemy, the Soviet Union, was ahead of the United States in this important field. He served two years and at his retirement President Eisenhower awarded Mr. McElroy the Medal of Freedom.

1959

In order to quell unnecessary activity and noise in the halls during classes, a system of hall monitors was established and overseen by Student Council. Any student who was not in class was required to have a hall pass. A school as large as Withrow had 21 student monitors every class period. There was also one supervisor and four roving monitors each period. The monitors were students who had a "free", or study hall period, so that when not occupied with monitor duties they could read or study at their posts.

Students without a hall pass were subject to detention. Non students without a hall pass were reported to police and subject to a \$100.00 fine or 30 days in the workhouse.

1960

With almost 3,300 students, Withrow began the year as Ohio's largest secondary school. In spite of the large numbers, Student Council believed that school spirit was lacking and had started a Pep Club the year before. Members were to sit together at football games and other sports events and cheer on the team. For 1960, popular chemistry teacher Mr. James Gallagher stepped in as advisor and the pep club was rechristened "The Voices of Mr. G". This year it was the largest, and loudest, pep club Withrow had ever had.

1961

Speech and drama teacher Miss Marjorie Rosenberger publishes her second textbook "Modern Speech". Coauthored with professor John V. Irwin, the book becomes the prime textbook for high school speech classes across the United States. Extensively revised in 1966, the textbook contained many photographs taken at Withrow. Miss Rosenberger's first textbook "Mark My Words" was published in 1947. Miss Rosenberger began her teaching career at Withrow in the fall of 1931 and retired after 40 years at Withrow in 1971.

1962

Six acres of land adjacent to the Withrow campus on the west were presented to the City of Cincinnati by Lucien Wulsin, President of the Baldwin Piano Company. City Council gave the land to the Public Recreation Commission. It is now the parkland on Dana Avenue behind the new Gymnasium. The Wulsin estate is now the site of the Regency highrise and townhouses.

1963

Modeled after their college counterparts, social clubs known as fraternities and sororities had always been active in Cincinnati public high schools. In the first thirty years of Withrow's existence, such social organizations were "underground", or not recognized by the Board of Education as school activities. In 1949 that had changed and social clubs were recognized and regulated by the school administration with grade requirements and monitored activities. In 1963 the Board of Education made the decision to abolish social clubs at the end of the school year. Some groups disbanded, others went back "underground". Considered elitist and discriminatory, the clubs also fostered strong friendships and student activities that other high school organizations did not provide.

1964

After 44 years of teaching at Withrow, Miss Helen Holbrook Taylor retires. A native of New Hampshire, but a graduate of the University of Cincinnati, Miss Taylor began her career at Withrow in 1919 as a physical education teacher. She switched to teaching English in the 1930's and remained as faculty advisor to the Girl's Athletic Association until her

retirement. The last member of the original faculty at Withrow to retire, Miss Taylor returned to New England to enjoy her retirement among her family.

1965

For the first time, night football games could be held at Withrow as lights had finally been installed in the stadium. Previously the only public high school stadium with lights was Trechter Stadium at Central Vocational High School (Later Courter Technical High and now the site of Cincinnati State Technical and Community College) at Central Parkway and Ludlow Ave. Trechter Stadium was named for Howard C. Trechter, the first Cincinnati public high school teacher to be killed in World War II. Sgt. Trechter had been a teacher and coach at both Central and Woodward High Schools until he enlisted in the army in 1942. He was a 1928 graduate of Withrow High School where he played football and baseball.

1966

After 35 years of producing the Withrow Minstrels, band director George Smith has retired. As a school with a wealth of musical talent, it is decided to continue the variety show tradition and "The Sounds of Withrow" begins its distinguished run. With an admission price of \$1.25 the show runs for three nights in early May. A 40 minute preview of the show was presented to a Cincinnati civic club downtown in early April.

1967

As civil unrest and riots rock the city of Cincinnati in June 1967, public gatherings have to be cancelled or postponed. Commencement exercises to be held in the Withrow stadium are cancelled and all 749 graduates get their diplomas in the mail instead of at a graduation ceremony. Undergraduates are not allowed to return to Withrow to pick up final report cards which are also mailed to student's homes. In total, some 24 public schools received some kind of damage during the riots.

1968

As the result of a dispute between two different teachers unions as to which organization would represent the teachers in bargaining with the Board of Education, 41 of the city's 103 public schools were forced to close in early February. Withrow was one of these schools. In support of the teachers, maintenance workers also went on strike so there was no heat or lunchroom services. Determined by the courts to be illegal, the strike was short lived and students returned to class after only a few days.

1969

Because of a generous gift of \$8,000 from the Chambers family, a 25 note carillon was installed in the Withrow tower in 1969. Sounding the Westminster chimes every hour and quarter hour, the carillon was also programmed to play tunes at 3:00 PM or when called for. It could also be turned off so as not to play at night but due to neighborhood complaints about the noise the carillon was finally turned off and was removed for good in 2008.

1970

Racial tension led to the cancellation of classes for several days. Committees of students, teachers, and administrators met to address the problems. Although there were no demands made by students during an assembly held to discuss the problems, some of their statements were misunderstood and serious trouble began. Many students refused to return to class, and although rumors of mass assaults began, they did not occur. The committee members worked hard to develop some solutions that allowed school to reopen.

1971

This was the first year Withrow was strictly a Senior High School. Junior high students now went to a new school. A new dress code was implemented ... this was a big deal! Boy's hair could be as long as desired if it was neat and clean. Both girls and boys were permitted to wear school t-shirts, jeans, shorts and sandals in appropriate seasons. The new dress code (as it was called) even allowed female teachers to wear pants in order to keep up with the styles of the day.

1972

The Honorable Tyrone Yates graduates. After leaving Withrow, Mr. Yates earned a bachelor's degree in history from the University of Cincinnati, where he was president of the student body, and a law degree from the University of Toledo. He was a member of Cincinnati City Council, twice serving as vice mayor, and an Ohio state representative. Currently, he is a Hamilton County Municipal Court judge.

1973

The Ombuds program begins. Members were described as "Withrow's listeners, mediators, advocates, watchdogs, and communicators," who were, first and foremost, problems solvers. Their goal was to provide opportunities for groups and individuals to intercommunicate, to work neutrally, and to see justice done. The organization was the first of its kind in the country.

1974

Ron Oester graduated from Withrow this year. Oester played his 17-year professional baseball career in the Cincinnati Reds organization. He began making regular appearances for the Reds in 1980, appearing in 100 games and finishing fourth in voting for National League Rookie of the Year. He played six seasons as the starting second baseman and was a key player during the Reds' 1990 World Championship season. After his playing career ended, Oester spent six seasons with the Reds as a Major League coach. The Withrow baseball field is now named for him.

1975

The cafeteria moved from the fourth floor of the main building to the new Vocational Arts building. Students who ate in the old cafeteria remember homemade mashed potatoes for 8 cents a serving and homemade pies for 11 cents per slice – every day!

Also, the "Tiger Lounge" opened on the fifth floor of the new building. Here the food was prepared by students in the vocational food service program. Serving to faculty during the week, the restaurant was also available for banquets and dinner meetings, all prepared and served by Withrow students.

1976

A Vocational Horticulture Center is started in the Withrow greenhouses, located where the gym is now. Withrow students grow plants, flowers and vegetables and sell the produce to fund future projects. Students learn to propagate plants, grow turf, nursery work and landscaping and generally help with campus, and Cincinnati parks beautification. The program lasted through the early 1980's giving graduates a good chance to find jobs in horticulture.

1977

CPS teachers went on strike for 19 days. One of the main issues was class size: teachers did not want more than 33 students in a class, but they did not win that concession from the board of education.

1978

The winter of 1977-78 was, as yet, the coldest and snowiest on record. A blizzard in January was declared an emergency by President Carter and Ohio Governor Rhodes. Cincinnati Mayor Jerry Springer (yes, THAT Jerry Springer) asked that all vehicles stay off the road except in an emergency situation. A coal strike had seriously depleted the supply available for heating but as the Withrow powerplant had just been converted from coal to gas, this was not a problem here.

1979

John Ruthven paints a tiger for the cover of the 1979 annual. Mr. Ruthven, a member of the class of 1943, left Withrow before graduating to fight in World War II. He returned after the war and was awarded his diploma in 1946. Mr. Ruthven is an American artist best known for his paintings of wildlife. In 1960, his painting "Redhead Ducks" won the Federal Duck Stamp competition. His wildlife paintings are on display at many museums including the Smithsonian Institution. Other artworks include a Passenger pigeon mural on the wall of a six-story building in downtown Cincinnati located at 15 8th Street. Mr. Ruthven was awarded the National Medal of Arts in 2004.

1980

A devastating hurricane tears through the Caribbean nation of the Dominican Republic. Withrow gets permission from the Board of Education to send 25 senior carpentry and masonry students to go there for a month to assist in rebuilding the country. Arranged by the Salvation Army and with Delta Airlines donating the transportation and Kroger donating food, the team hopes to be able to build 156 new houses in the town of San Juan De La Maguana. The team succeeds in rebuilding the town's entire electrical and water supply systems. In addition to this being a great learning experience, the Withrow team is awarded the Simon Lazarus Jr. Human Relations Award for their effort.

1981

The International Baccalaureate (IB) program, begun at Withrow in 1979, was one of only three such programs in the state of Ohio. The stringent program requires candidates to complete six exams – which were scored by IB examiners around the world, write a 4,000 word essay, and complete especially challenging coursework. The purpose was to permit students who complete the program to enter college at the sophomore level.

1982

City Engineers had condemned the bridge as unsafe several years earlier. A coordinated effort to raise \$150,000 was made for its restoration. Combined with funds raised by the student body and grants from various organizations, the bridge was rededicated in November 1981. Annie Glenn, wife of Senator John Glenn (the first man to orbit the moon) spoke at the bridge re-opening ceremony. Mrs. Glenn had been invited by Monica Nolan, sister of longtime Withrow teacher Nora May Nolan, in whose name the bridge was dedicated.

1983

Withrow is one of 50 schools in the United States to win a \$20,000 grant from the Ford Foundation. "Withrow was recognized for instituting an international studies program and math and science programs that have proven to be very effective". The grant was awarded to public high schools that had a notable improvement in academics over a ten year period. Taft High School was the only other Cincinnati school to win the prestigious grant.

1984

The Cincinnati Enquirer ran an article on Withrow's ESL (English as a Second Language) program. Withrow was the only high school to offer such a program. That year, there were 150 students from Cambodia, Vietnam, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Japan, Ethiopia, Central America and Greece. Academic classes were taught in English but the students were tutored in their native language. As their English proficiency increased, the students were gradually moved into regular classes.

1985

Withrow's OWE (Occupational Work Experience) students won several medals in the Southwestern Ohio District Vocational Industrial Clubs of America (VICA) Skill Olympics.

Students in this program attend classes in the morning and work in the afternoon. Part of their training involves employment practices, job safety and good work habits. Withrow students continued to be champions in the Skill Olympics for several years.

1986

An article in the Cincinnati Enquirer was titled "Withrow fights deteriorating facilities." Various problems included rats in the walls, a leaky roof in the main gym, a damaged and unusable girls' swimming pools, and exposed, twisted metal pipes. Withrow Alumni began coordinating efforts to raise money and manpower for the repairs.

1987

This was the year of the Great Smell Mystery. A foul odor would appear suddenly and people began to feel nauseated. Teachers opened windows to their classrooms to air them out, and so by the time representatives from the board of Education arrived, the odor was gone. Plans were made to shut down one-half of the building and go on double shifts. The day before the plan was to go into effect, the mystery was solved. It turned out to be a broken underground sewer pipe. Whenever the Home Economics Department used the dishwashers, water flowed into the pipe and carried the odor out into a wind tunnel then through the air vents to the top floor of the school. Problem solved. Odor gone!

1988

The Rev. Jesse Jackson delivers an inspirational anti-drugs speech to Withrow students and staff. Mr. Jackson was on the campaign trail running for president in the Democratic party primaries. He also spoke to several other groups during his stop in Cincinnati but Withrow was first. He was later defeated in the primaries and the Democratic nominee for president was Governor Michael Dukakis of Massachusetts.

1989

Alicia Reece graduates. After attending Grambling State University, Ms. Reece went on to become vice mayor of the city of Cincinnati and a member of the Ohio House of Representatives. She served on several important committees, including Finance & Appropriations, Small Business & Economic Development, and Local Government Committees. She also headed up the Ohio Legislative Black Caucus. Due to term limits she was unable to run for re-election in 2018.

1990

The swimming pools in the Withrow Gymnasium were closed by the Board of Health. The pools, one for boys and one for girls, were underneath their respective gyms. Neither pool was regulation size so swim meets could not be held here in the later years. Withrow had a championship boy's swim team for many years and the girl's Dolphin Club was one of the most popular groups in the school.

1991

Monica Nolan and the Friends of Withrow win a 1990 Civic Beautification award for their work in restoring the fountain, which is the only outdoor Rookwood fountain in the city. Another beautification project this year is the cleanup of the area between Withrow and the Regency high rise next door. Students clean up trash and litter and discover 24 varieties of wildflowers. A path and fountain with benches are installed.

1992

Kathy Wade, 1973 Withrow graduate, and her late husband founded Learning Through Art. The organization has since raised more than \$6million to support children and families. Programs include a summer concert series - Crown Jewels of Jazz, Books Alive for Kids, and Cincy

Reads. Ms. Wade herself is a twice EMMY nominated award-winning jazz vocalist who performs regularly around Cincinnati.

1993

Dr. Patricia Rice becomes Withrow's first female principal. Dr. Rice had been Director of Withrow's International Studies Program since 1983 and had also served as summer school principal. She remains at Withrow until mid-May of 1996, when she moves to the Board of Education to develop the International Baccalaureate curriculum.

1994

Budget cuts hit Withrow hard this year. All extracurricular activities except varsity football and girls' volleyball are eliminated. Also eliminated are the positions of librarian and media specialist and two of the assistant principal positions. Severe cutbacks on replacement and repair of equipment are instituted. Summer school for most courses is dropped.

1995

False fire alarms plague the school. The fire department says each time the alarm goes off, the school must be evacuated. Sometimes this happens two or three times a day! After the alarm went off three times in a single morning, the fire department relented, and the school was able to determine whether or not there was really a fire, avoiding unnecessary evacuation. False alarms dropped dramatically after that.

1996

The operating tax levy passes and some items cut from the budget are restored. The library reopens, but there is no money to purchase materials. Sports activities are reinstated, but Tower News is cut. Principal Dennis Matthews pledges that Student Council will return the following year. After the school year ends, staff, administration, parents, and community members meet to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the school and determine the future direction. Two takeaways were the need for students to have more input and the need for relevant extra-curricular activities.

1997

Science teacher James Crawford, with the assistance of Withrow Alumni, publishes his 515 page book *Gentle Slopes and Lofty Tower*. A chronical of life at Withrow High School since 1919, Mr. Crawford researched old Annuals, the school newspaper Tower News and many other sources to present a much needed history of the happenings at Withrow over the ensuing years. Copies are still available in the Alumni Center.

1998

Financed by a grant from the Junior League of Cincinnati, a College and Career Counseling Center opens. Staffed by Junior League member and alumni volunteers, the center provides Withrow students with information and assistance regarding post-high school education and career opportunities. The Withrow Alumni Association had applied for the grant. An addition, an Alumni museum was opened in a classroom on the first floor of the south wing.

1999

The school driveway from Kendall to Dana Avenues was memorialized as "Norma Lane's Way" in honor of the late Mrs. Lane who taught at Withrow for twelve years. Mrs. Lane, who died in 1995, was active with Withrow's Youth in Government and Black Achievers.

2000

Years of neglect had left the lights in the Withrow stadium in such bad shape that all Friday night home football games were postponed to Saturday afternoon. The lights and wiring could

not be fixed until after the season was over. Students, and the football team, feared that attendance would suffer. Fortunately, temporary lights were brought in, the Friday night games were re-instated and the season began on time.

2001

Stan Matlock, Withrow class of 1941, dies. During the 1950's and 60's, Mr. Matlock's radio program "Magazine of the Air", which began in 1952, was the most listened to program in Cincinnati capturing half of all radio listeners. Even after he retired, he broadcast live on WKRC on weekend mornings from his home in Florida.

2002

Withrow opened the school year with three separate schools — the University School as a college preparatory school with 200 ninth graders, the International School for all four years, and the Traditional School for 10th through 12th grades. Each subsequent year, the University School added a class and the Traditional School lost a class.

2003

The first "Tales of Withrow" is published in Hyde Park Living magazine. Sixty students in grades 10-12 either interviewed one of 20 living alumni or researched one of 11 who were deceased and wrote articles to fulfill English class requirements. HP Living editor Grace DiGregorio chose five articles to be published over five consecutive months. English teacher Diane Roland spearheaded this initial effort.

2004

The Withrow band was invited to play on Thanksgiving day at the Turkey Day Classic football game between Alabama State University and Tuskegee University in Montgomery, Alabama. The band, which had only been revived the previous year, had new instruments provided by the Alumni Association and uniforms formerly worn by the Anderson High School band.

2005

The Alumni Center and Withrow Alumni moved from the first floor into what had formerly been the school library on the second floor. The Junior League College/Career Center also moved to the old library and was there until it ceased operations after 2012 when the Withrow staff assumed those responsibilities. The library was moved to a new Media Resource Center in what had been the business center and the original cafeteria.

2006

The new gym is completed and dedicated on October 6, 2006. Withrow holds its first home basketball game since 1976. The facility holds 1,500 people. A fitness center with state of the art equipment and a weight room were established off the old tunnel above what used to be the boys' swimming pool. These facilities are not only used by the athletes but by all the students who must participate in the mandatory two years of gym class. Each student has a personal goal they must monitor.

2007

The new synthetic football field, donated by the Cincinnati Bengals is dedicated in September. There are a new score board, new lights (lights were first installed in the stadium in 1965) and a new track, which is also available for community use. Because of the new gym, Withrow was chosen to be one of the host schools for the Seasonal Round of the State Volleyball Tournament.

2008

Due to budget cuts, Withrow University High returns to co-ed classes for upper classmen. Since

2002 all grades had been split by gender. Boys and girls in the ninth and tenth grades would continue to go to separate classes. Under the single sex classroom split, Withrow High School became one of the highest performing high schools in Cincinnati.

2009

Withrow University High School principal Sharon Johnson appears on the "Lou Dobbs Tonight" program on CNN. Ms. Johnson had appeared on the show earlier in the year during a story about Cincinnati Public Schools and appeared again on a panel discussion of education. Mr. Dobbs called Ms. Johnson and another principal who appeared on his show as "two heroes in this fight to improve our schools".

2010

A Korean War Memorial plaque is installed in the hallway leading to the cafeteria and gyms. Listing the names of the eight known alumni who gave their lives in the Korean conflict, it joined the plaque listing the names of the 107 Withrow alumni who sacrificed their lives in World War II. Later acknowledged are the eight alumni who perished in the Viet Nam War.

2011

For the seventh year in a row Withrow University High school held the Summer Bridge program for incoming 9th graders. The three week program is held to prepare students for a successful transition to high school. Approximately 80% of incoming WUHS freshmen attend the program. For Withrow International High School, the summer program lasts for two weeks but only about 33% of the incoming 9th graders participated.

2012

Withrow University High School and Withrow International High School were once again combined to form one Withrow. The Withrow bridge repairs are completed, its second restoration, and the bridge is reopened. Withrow alumni provided approximately 38% of the cost to repair the bridge.

2013

The Rookwood fountain between the tower and front entrance needed serious repairs. Tiles were loose and broken and a few missing. The could not be matched so all the tiles, except for those in the center, had to be replaced. The Rookwood Pottery was a world famous art pottery founded and run in Cincinnati from 1880 until the late 1950's. It has recently been revived. A Rookwood tile drinking fountain is in the main hall.

2014

A Health Clinic was opened in the school to serve not only Withrow students but to serve other east side CPS schools and qualifying residents. It is operated and funded by the Cincinnati Health Department. In the following year the Dental Clinic was opened in the old choir room to serve the same patients served by the Health Clinic; it is also operated and funded by the Health Department.

2015

Major League Baseball holds the All-Star game in Cincinnati. As part of the celebration, MLB and the Reds provided \$500,000 for the installation of a new baseball (boys) and softball (girls) field, each with their own scoreboard. The baseball field was dedicated to Withrow grad and Reds Hall of Fame player Ron Oester ('74).

2016

The Jane Greene/Diane Roland Reading Center opens in the Alumni Center. Created, funded and staffed by alumni and friends, the Center provides a wide range of fiction and non-fiction

reading material geared to producing life-time readers. The Withrow library had ceased operations in 2001 and the Reading Center is a welcome addition.

2017

The Alumni recovered the old Junior High wrought iron sign that had been removed in 1972 to unknown whereabouts. It was restored and installed on brick columns that mimic the original brick columns that it rested on. The sign was installed at the rear entrance to the Junior High wing of the north building.

2018

Withrow grad Robert Canida received The Erskine B. Bowles staff service award for his work promoting humanitarian values within the University of North Carolina System. The award is given annually to a staff member who has shown "exemplary understanding, empathy, and devotion to humankind." After graduating from Withrow in 1984, Dr. Bowles earned a BS in Political Science from Xavier University, a Masters of Library Science from the University of Kentucky, and a PhD from North Carolina A & T State University in Interdisciplinary Leadership Studies. Dr. Canida currently serves as director of the University of North Carolina at Pembroke's Office for Diversity and Inclusion.

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