



Parent Newsletter

Archbishop Molloy High School
50th Anniversary

Dear Stanner Families.

We have something to celebrate! One hundred and fifteen years ago our school began as St. Ann's Academy in Manhattan. In 1957 the Marist Brothers closed St. Ann's and moved to a new school building, Archbishop Molloy High School.

The Brothers, Sisters, Faculty and Staff are very proud of the fifty years of education and activities that have taken place at Archbishop Molloy. We have changed, we have grown, and we have become a great school. This year we want to celebrate all that has occurred over these past five decades, and we can think of no better way than to gather together, as a community, and collectively give thanks to the Good Lord for his blessings on this institution.

We will celebrate our 50 years with an anniversary Mass of Thanksgiving at St. Patrick's Cathedral on Wednesday, April 9, 2008. All of us- faculty, staff, students will travel by a special subway train, for our use alone, provided by the M.T.A., to St. Patrick's. The New York City Police Department will escort us to the Cathedral where at our 10:30 Liturgy many of Molloy's priest alumni will concelebrate with Father Frank Shannon, our main celebrant. Our choruses will lead us in song, while faculty and students will assist at the Liturgy.

This celebration Mass will be an important part of our 50th anniversary. We will continue to keep you informed of our plans for that day, and I will seek the assistance of our parents to help us during that day.

To help you understand and appreciate what happened 50 years ago and all that we are celebrating, please enjoy Bro. Richard Van Houten's narration of the change from St. Ann's Academy to Archbishop Molloy High School.

May God continue to bless Archbishop Molloy High School
Bro. Roy

St. Ann's Academy to Archbishop Molloy High School



St. Ann's on 76th Street

In the beginning there was St. Ann's...

Several Catholic school fires in the late forties and early fifties prompted Cardinal Spellman to personally inspect the older school buildings in the archdiocese, including St. Ann's. At the Cardinal's urging, the

Brother Director obtained a proposal to replace the heating

system in all eight buildings in 1953. When Cardinal Spellman and his staff saw the large estimate to replace the antiquated coal furnaces, he advised the Brothers to seek a

new location for the school, even if it meant leaving the New York Archdiocese. By early 1955, sagging floors indicated structural inadequacies, and the Building Department was adamant that complete rehabilitation was needed to comply with safety codes. It

was impossible to rebuild the existing plant with school in session and prohibitive to purchase additional land on the Upper East Side of Manhattan.



Lexington Ave. and 77th Street

All of these circumstances led to discussions culminating in an announcement by the Provincial, Br. Linus William, that St. Ann's Academy would move to Long Island – a logical choice, since many Stanners lived in Queens. In preparation for the move, the lower elementary grades were phased out and a search committee considered a number of sites.

The committee rejected inexpensive but sparsely populated land amidst potato fields on Route 110 in Amityville. Another suburban site, today's Roosevelt Field shopping mall, was rejected for lack of good transportation.

In Queens County, an architect drew plans to renovate a six-story commercial building on Northern Boulevard in Woodside, an Irish-Catholic working class neighborhood with good subway connections for the Manhattan residents from the Academy. Lack of space for playing fields led to abandonment of that plan. The Brothers almost bought the Bulova Watch Building on the Grand Central Parkway, but learned that the Sacred Heart Brothers were about to open Msgr. McClancy High School nearby. The committee considered a site near Jewel Avenue and the Grand Central Parkway in Queens, today the site of Parkway Hospital.

At the same time, Archbishop Thomas Edmund Molloy was challenged to meet the needs of the rising baby-boom population. During his administration, 75 new parishes were created, and 177 Catholic schools were opened in the diocese. The Church recognized his extraordinary zeal by conferring the title of Archbishop, usually reserved for heads of Archdioceses.

In the 1930's Archbishop Molloy had purchased a six-acre site in Briarwood Queens, with plans to build a minor seminary. What is now the school site at that time included an amusement park with wooden bungalows, a few of which still stand in the surrounding neighborhood.

America's entry into World War II halted the non-essential construction, and the Archbishop's seminary plans were shelved. Instead, the army commandeered the hilltop site for defense. Anti-aircraft guns were located where the school building now stands, and Quonset huts housed soldiers on the present ball field.

In 1955, the Archbishop decided the diocese needed a Catholic high school more urgently than a Queens Seminary to complement Cathedral Prep in Brooklyn. In exchange for free use of the diocesan land, the Brothers agreed to build and operate a high school on the Briarwood site. Construction in Briarwood began in 1955. Brother Linus approached Archbishop Molloy for permission to name the school building in his honor, but he modestly declined. After Molloy's death on November 26, 1956, the Brothers appealed to his successor, Bishop Brian J. McEntegart, who granted permission. While their grateful gesture is understandable, a symbolic link to the school's history was lost with the renaming of St. Ann's. Nonetheless the beehive symbol and school motto became part of Archbishop Molloy High School's crest, and all its students continue to use the nickname "Stanner." The faculty that opened Molloy was virtually identical to those who served in the final years at St. Ann's in Manhattan.

In June 1957, the Brothers marked their sixty-five years of service at St. Ann's. On the Sunday before Labor

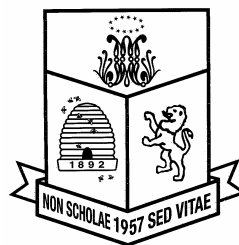
Day, the Brothers moved their belongings – mostly by subway, as the fifty men trudged suitcases and cardboard boxes on the Lexington Avenue and Queens Boulevard lines. An open truck moved a few pieces of relatively new school equipment to Molloy, including teacher's desks that had been built by the Brothers at St. Ann's. That Sunday, the transplanted community of Brothers sat down to its first meal in the new dining room at Molloy.

In September of 1957, the Brothers opened the doors of Archbishop Molloy High School. Many St. Ann's students commuted out to Briarwood, including sixth, seventh and eighth graders. The junior high school was housed in the three first floor classrooms. One elementary grade was phased out each year, so that by September of 1960, only the high school classes remained.



The new school's gymnasium was the last part of the school to be completed; gym classes in the fall of 1957 were relegated to the public park across the street. That November, Lou Carnesecca launched Molloy's first basketball season – and his last at the school – with a perfect season, no losses and the City Championship. By the first Christmas, the gym was complete and students performed a Christmas show.

Since the gymnasium-auditorium was completed in December, the administration postponed the dedication ceremony until fairer weather in the spring. On May 4, 1958, Bishop McEntegart sprinkled holy water on the cornerstone and blessed the new building.



MOLLOY
50 years of Excellence
115 years of Tradition