



STUDENT STORIES

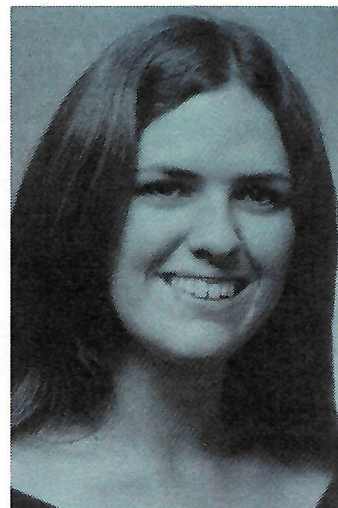
THE STUDENT BODY PRESIDENT AS CUSTODIAN

Mary McNeill graduated from Granada High School in 1972. During her four years at Granada she sang in the choir and with the jazz band, played basketball and field hockey, was a cheerleader, served as Student Representative to the School Board, and

was the Student Body President. However, the job she held the longest, was being part of the custodial staff.



Most Dedicated Senior



Student Body President

At the start of her sophomore year, Mary, whose mother was a single mom, went in to Principal Jack Lee's office seeking work. She recalls, "Mr. Lee was sitting behind his desk and I was pretty scared but I just blurted out, 'Mr. Lee, I need a job.' He replied, 'I do have a custodial position.' I said, 'I'll take it.' For the next two and one-half years I learned toilet washing and floor buffing."¹⁰⁰

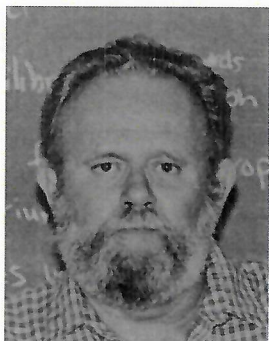


1972 Custodian Yearbook Photo (Mary is front row left)

¹⁰⁰ Mary McNeill, April 3, 2014

Ms. McNeill, now a successful attorney in Berkeley, recalls the custodial job as a character-building experience and fondly remembers Granada for several other reasons: (1) phenomenal staff, (2) the school's empowering environment for students, and (3) a student body of memorable students, with the class of '72, in particular, one of great camaraderie.

Regarding staff, Mary noted, "I had so many great teachers at Granada—it would take pages to do them all justice. A couple, however, had life-long impact on me. One was my field hockey and basketball coach, Donna Fong, whose values were impeccable. She cared far more about how we played than whether we won or lost." She added, "Jack Beery was more than a teacher. He was a mentor, a compass, and a beacon, who genuinely cared about and strove to bring out the best in all of his students. I know a fellow who was heading down a rocky path, but through Mr. Beery's mentoring chose a different route and is now an accomplished attorney and highly acclaimed author."¹⁰¹ Of her then- principal, Jack Lee, Mary noted, 'Mr. Lee walked the walk. I remember reading about Title IX, a federal law, in the paper, and the requirement that there be equal provision of educational benefits,



Jack Beery

including athletics, for both sexes. Another student and I went to see Mr. Lee about it because at that time the girls' basketball team was practicing after all the boys' teams were through with the gym, and we had few resources. He listened to our comments, and said, 'Let me see what I can do.' The next thing you know our practice times were changed and we received new equipment, and we won the championship that year. Mr. Lee validated our efforts to seek change. It was overpowering."¹⁰²

Mary also applauded Granada's expansive curriculum. "There were classes on the Civil Rights Movement, Ecology, the Vietnam War, numerous languages, music and art offerings, and even a bicycling class where we rode 30-40 miles in an afternoon (thanks to flexible scheduling). After taking that class, five of us, then 15 years old, rode our bikes to Carmel—a life changing adventure."¹⁰³ She concluded, "I credit Granada with providing me a quality education, access to many wonderful mentors, and the confidence to tackle new challenges."¹⁰⁴

BREAKER, BREAKER—WHAT'S YOUR 20?

Starting in the late 1970s, GHS administrators started carrying walkie-talkies around campus to communicate with each other and the custodial staff. As time went on some administrators started to talk the lingo of CB truckers, as well as law enforcement. It was common to hear certain administrators asking each other, "What's your 20?" Translation: "Where are you located?"

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

Larry Reid, a vice-principal during the mid-1990s was not one of the administrators who adhered to the new nomenclature, but, nonetheless, became the target of an advanced game of hide and seek.

Each night the walkie-talkies were charged in a room in the Main Office. Mr. Reid came to work sometime in 1997 and asked where his walkie-talkie was. No one knew, but asked him if he'd left it in the charger the previous night. He was adamant that he had and soon became the butt of jokes, "How can you lose your walkie-talkie" etc. Soon staff stated hearing kids' voices coming across the walkie-talkie system - stuff like, Breaker, Breaker-what's Your 20?" or "There's a fight in the quad," or "There's a boat in the arroyo," and finally "Breaker, Breaker--did you guys lose something?"

The administrators saw this as a challenge and were determined to apprehend those responsible. However there was no clear pattern to when the messages would start. Some of the messages were comical: "Mr. Reid, are you going to buy me lunch today?" or a voice would say "We see you" as administrators were patrolling the campus. Immediately all eyes would go to Boot Hill or some other location. It was finally decided to ignore the comments and proceed without using any further code words. A couple of weeks later, the missing walkie-talkie appeared on a bench in the quad. GAME OVER!

GODFATHER IV

Prior to the release of the 1972 movie, *The Godfather*, the "mob" persona had already reached the Granada students. It could have been caused by the lingering effects of the *Bonnie and Clyde* movie, or the anticipation of Vito Corleone, but in 1971 a tradition started that was transferred from class to class until the mid-1970s, when the glamour and impact of the era had waned.



Each fall it became a theme for the senior class to dress in "mob" attire. Danny King ('75) recalled the impact on him. "We looked up to those upper classmen, and when they dressed like that, we couldn't wait to follow."¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁵ Conversation with Danny King, February, 25, 2014



However, there were some side stories to a bunch of high school boys trying to look like the next Al Capone. Before the Winter Holiday 1971, a bunch of “the boys,” all decked out in gangland attire decided to take a rather long lunch. On the way to their favorite haunt, Der Wienerschnitzel, they decided to stop off at Home Savings. They proceeded to walk in and hand the teller a note that said, “Merry Christmas, From The Mob.” Needless to say, the teller did not see the humor in such a note and pushed the silent alarm. These “mobsters” left the bank and headed to get some food. As they walked out of Der Wienerschnitzel they were met by four to five police cars

in the lot. No one was laughing.

When asked about the consequence of such behavior, one of the “mobsters” related, “Remember, this was a time that the consequences at home were more severe than those at school.”¹⁰⁶ That being said, it should be noted that one “mobster’s” dad was the City Manager of Livermore and another’s was a FBI official who worked bank robberies. One can imagine that the punishment was swift and severe.

THE LEGEND OF TOM HANSEN

To fully understand “Tom Hansen” you need to understand the scheduling system at Granada from 1968 to 1980. (A chapter is devoted to TUFOLD in this publication). Students registered daily for the classes they were to take on that day. This was called the AD PERIOD. In 1970 a group of students, also known as the Lunch Club, devised a way to register a student at Granada, take exams, participate in extra-curricular events, and appear in the yearbook. Of course, they could not have pulled off such a caper without inside help. They did find a willing accomplice in their AD PERIOD teacher (who shall go nameless).

Each day a schedule was handed in for “Tom Hansen” and given the fact that most teachers asked students to sign in, there was no problem in Tom attending all his classes. He even participated in sports like cross country, even though it was reported he had polio as a child.

The best evidence of “Tom Hansen’s” legend is through the writings of his peers. The following is how he is remembered:

“I have to admit that I was sort of an enabler, since on occasion, I covered for him by filling out and turning in his schedule for the day.”¹⁰⁷

“I remember him as the shy type, almost reclusive at times. However, once you got to know him, he came out of his shell and actually was sort of a troublemaker. Being in his “ad period,” I happen to know that he had an attendance problem. It drove the attendance office crazy because

¹⁰⁶ Conversation with an anonymous “mobster”, February 17, 2014

¹⁰⁷ Telephone conversation with The Enabler, March 23, 2014

In June, 1970, in order to address the attendance problems, Counselor Jerry March reported to the School Board that the teachers had volunteered to take on an extra work in order to divert money from hiring more teachers toward adding three counselors to the staff. These counselors would work to motivate those students who were “chronic class cutters.”¹²⁰ In addition, teachers would take attendance several times a day and there would be more random checks on students. Students would be required to sign in when entering the library or resource centers. Teachers would also help patrol the halls around their rooms in order to limit the noise between modules.

Despite its problems, TUFOLD had many supporters. Jack Lee touted that students under TUFOLD “can take more classes, get better grades, more awards, log more hours in vocational education classes, and have a higher outside work placement rate than the traditional school.”¹²¹ Students who needed more structure were placed in an Opportunity class.¹²² An Independent Study Program allowed students to pursue an individualized program. Jodi Brouillard Robison (Class of '77) recalled her independent study class in the last semester of her senior year when she took English with Joylene Riley. Together they established the guidelines for the class. Because Jodi enjoyed reading Steinbeck’s books, her assignments included reading several of his novels with a corresponding written assignment for each book, meeting with the teacher once a week, going on a field trip to Steinbeck country, and completing a project. TUFOLD gave her the flexibility to follow her interests, helped her develop her curriculum, and allowed time for scheduled meetings as required.

One of the most often heard criticisms of the program was that “many have trouble adjusting to Granada’s less structured system, in handling the added responsibilities.”¹²³ By the spring of 1974, the requests for student transfers to Livermore High School were greater than the school could enroll. To address this criticism, Granada began to investigate the means to provide an alternative schedule within the school for students who required a more structured type of instruction.¹²⁴ The new program was called “School-Within-A-School” (SWIS). At the start, SWIS offered 250 students and nine teachers a lower teacher-student ratio and provided a basic education curriculum at the freshman and sophomore levels. It served students who were deficit in credits, had irregular attendance or behavior patterns, or had needs which indicated a more structured program could be a positive force.”¹²⁵

August 1976 brought changes to Granada. Jack Snodgrass returned to the school as Principal. The student population had grown to 2,235 students for a school originally built for 1,500 students. There was a staggered starting time schedule to overcome the housing problem, a double lunch period, and a new traditional program for 150 freshmen.

¹²⁰ *Herald & News*. June 4, 1970

¹²¹ *Herald & News*, August 6, 1972. Jack Lee

¹²² *Herald & News*. August 7, 1973

¹²³ *Herald & News*. August 7, 1973

¹²⁴ *Herald & News*, March 28, 1974

¹²⁵ *Tri-Valley Herald*. May 29, 1974

In the end, the additional cost of the program meant that it could no longer be sustained. The District had never provided additional funds to the school to support TUFOLD. In 1980, facing financial challenges, the School Board cut TUFOLD to save more than \$20,000 that had been needed to sustain the program annually in computer, paper, and personnel costs. The school needed this money and could no longer sustain this cost of TUFOLD. There were attempts to save TUFOLD –protests by students, efforts by The Committee for Quality Education, petitions, and numerous letters to the editor. But the innovative program came to an end.

In an effort to retain some of the benefits of TUFOLD, in particular the varied class periods, a new schedule was created that allowed one flexible period daily and allowed students to schedule classes on a daily basis and to meet for longer periods in classes when special help or extensive project work was needed. The new schedule was a seven period day with a double lunch period. Flex periods were every day but Monday, and all flex periods were at the beginning and the end of the day.¹²⁶ The students were required to take three 45 minute classes, which met daily and a choice of four 55 minute classes that could be extended to an extra period or eliminated one day a week.¹²⁷ And soon this too was relinquished and the school returned to a traditional six period day.

BLOCK SCHEDULE

The school district faced financial problems again in 1991. The district changed the hiring ratio from 24:1 to 30:1, or an increase of 20% for a teacher's class size. What this meant to Granada was the loss of sixteen teachers, all five counselors, and six classified employees. This had a devastating effect on the school program. A teacher's class load increased from 150 to 180-200 students for the year. Class size increased. It was not uncommon to find classes with close to 40 students. One French class had 43 students who at times had to sit on the cabinets under the windows. The Fire Marshall was called in, and classes repositioned.

The staff agreed to work for one year under these conditions, but immediately began the search to find relief for the teachers and a better learning environment for the students within the financial restraints. This time the search for a schedule took them to Colorado where they observed a school on a block schedule.

A block schedule was a radical change from the century old six-seven periods, 55 minute schedule that was common place throughout the United States. The block schedule, adopted by Granada, originated from research conducted by Joseph Carroll, and published in the *The Copernican Plan*. Why the name Copernican Plan? Nicolaus Copernicus was a 16th century scholar whose major contribution was his explanation of the movement of the planets. At the time, the established thought was that the earth was the center of the universe, which Copernicus said made no sense. If, on the other hand, one accepted the sun as the center of the universe, all the accepted measurements made sense.¹²⁸

¹²⁶ *Tri-Valley Herald*. May 21, 1980

¹²⁷ *Valley Times*. May 16, 1980

¹²⁸ Joseph Carroll, *The Copernican Plan Evaluated*, p.x

they never knew if he was really on campus any given day. I remember that they even called his name over the loudspeaker one day, asking him to report to the attendance office.”¹⁰⁸

“Tom had lots of friends who helped him by signing him in, turning in homework, and even taking tests for him on occasion. On the other hand, Tom was a motivated student who was able to take a large variety of classes which was only made possible by TUFOLD.”¹⁰⁹

“Tom, however, had sporadic involvement in lots of extracurricular activities, but he was a regular member and even president of the Lunch Club one year. He was an inspirational leader of the club, and it’s not a surprise that it disbanded shortly after Tom’s graduation in 1973.”¹¹⁰

“Tom was an unpredictable runner in cross country. One day he would be running in the middle of the pack, blending in well with the rest of the team, while the next day he was nowhere to be found.”¹¹¹

“Despite his popularity, he never had a steady girlfriend, if you don’t count a couple of dates that he had with Betty Dont. Tom was very camera shy; his shyness was so severe that he had a disguised Bruce Woolery stand in for him in his yearbook picture.”¹¹² However, The Enabler added, “Tom was a prolific signer of yearbooks himself. Many seniors had his signature in their yearbook.”¹¹³

Given Tom Hansen’s shyness, it is no wonder that he was voted Shyest Senior by his classmates. By this time, however, the administration had drawn the line and removed Tom from this award.

“Tom Hansen” is still a difficult person to keep track of. He has moved around quite a bit since graduation in 1973, but every now and then he will appear on Facebook, as he recently posted a Happy Birthday message to his Ad Period teacher. His classmates also claim that he made a cameo appearance at the forty-year class reunion in 2013. However, as his classmates tried to find him, he disappeared once again. The legend is alive and well!

As a footnote to this story it is ironic that in fall 1973 a new student registered at Granada High School. His name—Tom Hansen. There is no available evidence to report how this real student was treated by the administration.

¹⁰⁸ Anonymous member of the Lunch Club, March 5, 2014

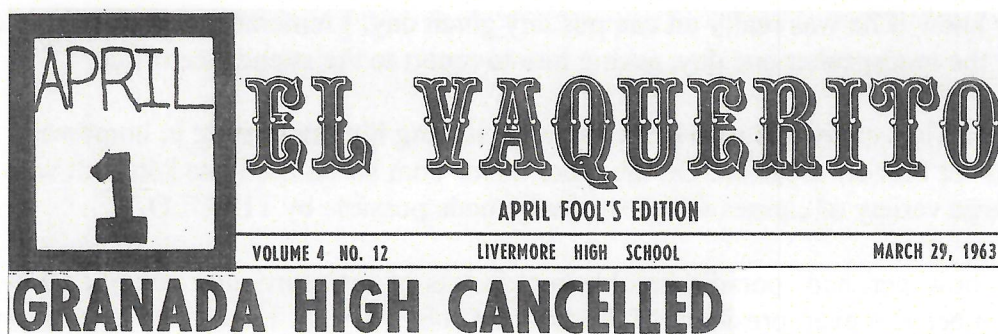
¹⁰⁹ Tom Hansen’s AD Period teacher, March 5, 2014

¹¹⁰ Lunch Club member, March 26, 2014

¹¹¹ Cross Country teammate, February 20, 2014

¹¹² Anonymous member of the Lunch Club, March 5, 2014

¹¹³ Telephone conversation with The Enabler, March 23, 2014



This headline appeared in the April 1, 1963 edition of the Livermore High School newspaper. Remember, at this time, the Granada freshmen were spending the year at Livermore High and were scheduled to start at Granada in September 1963. The rest of the article is quite amusing (even if it is poorly written):

On the afternoon of March 30, 1963, as an excavation was being done for pipeline and additional facilities on the ground site of future Granada High School, a remarkable gusher of oil was discovered. Following consideration and decision on the part of all officials involved, it has been reported that, due to uncontrollable circumstances, construction of the new institution as scheduled has been cancelled until further notice.

Constructioner, Mr. Gerald F. Whitley, after receiving a tremendous blast of oil in the face as it spurt uncontrollably from the upturned earth, immediately contracted contractor officials, and they, in turn, made a direct call to future high school principal Mr. Jack Lee. Following a meeting of the Granada officials, contractor board, and school district administrators, an urgent call was put through to the San Francisco Geologist's Bureau with a request for inspection of the site, and an estimation of just how much oil is contained beneath the crust of the established school property.

During that afternoon, the future Granada High School site was literally swarming with specialized geologist equipment. By four o'clock, a meeting was called among the officials, and the following report was made. Due to the discovery of large deposits of oil on the site of Granada High School which will, no doubt, change the entire future of thousands of Livermore residents, further construction of the site will be discontinued. The exact amount of oil, which is contained therein, is not yet determined, but drilling action on the grounds by the Standard Oil Company will be enacted with the next month. Because of this revolutionary discovery, a new site will have to be found for the future high school immediately, or, as an inevitable consequence, construction will be totally discontinued, and a new high school will not be in effect before the ensuing school term.

On April 1, 1963 Livermore High School "fired" the opening shot of this fifty-year rivalry. And Granada's response: **GAME ON!**