

OUR FIRST 25 YEARS
(Reprinted courtesy of Ruth Thomas Dutcher '46)
1958 - 1983

The idea of a Carlisle Alumni Association was formed on Feb. 10, 1958 when Paul Spurlock, who was then the Superintendent of Schools, sent a letter to officers of each graduating class of CHS. (The first class to graduate was 1897). This letter was prompted by several graduates who had approached him about the possibility of organizing an alumni organization of some type. Seventeen alumni met on March 8, 1958 and the consensus of the group was in favor of forming an alumni organization. A class correspondent from each graduating class was selected and they in turn contacted as many alumni as possible for a meeting. At this meeting, one 107 alumni, representing forty-six graduating classes, showed their interest in such an organization. Clifford Prall presided over that first meeting and it was the unanimous vote of those present, that such an organization was in order and they chose the name: Carlisle Alumni Association. Harold Patterson presented a constitution, which was adopted and dues were set at \$.50 per member. Many suggestions were conveyed at that first meeting: an annual banquet or picnic; a booster group for the school; scholarships and recognition of possibly both junior and senior students at graduation. The first officers were elected and the organization was off and running. The officers were: President Earl "Corky" Adamson; Vice-President Clifford Prall; Secretary Frances Mott Henley; Treasurer Keith Pegram; Directors Austin Keeney, Tom Mott, and Frank Arnold. The first banquet was held on June 14, 1958 with 300 alumni gathered in the "old gym" for an evening of food, fun and fellowship. Clifford Prall presented \$100 to the first CHS Alumni Scholarship recipient, Glen Prall. John Goodhue and Opal Lowther were in charge of the program, Laura Powers, head of the school lunch program, and her crew served a cafeteria-style dinner with music by the "Carlisle Swing Kings". (Those dances were dropped in 1964 due to lack of interest). That fall, two more board members were added, Blanche Lanning and Agnes Owen Nickle. They worked hard to promote Homecoming activities that included a dance on October 10th. Initially, the Alumni had money-raising activities such as: Alumni Basketball games, ice-cream socials, and square dances for the Scholarship fund. In 1965, Alumni were then asked for contributions for the scholarship fund. We have watched our gifts grow from \$100 - \$8,000. The 14th annual banquet was held in 1971, in the brand new "commons".

OUR SECOND 25 YEARS 1983 – 2008

In 1991, the scholarship committee was formed and amendments were added to the by-laws by recommendation of Corky Adamson. Norma Keeney began compiling all our addresses on a database for ease in mailing and accuracy. In 1995, we established the Duane VanPatten Memorial Scholarship for students attending a trade school. This was later renamed the VanPatten Memorial Scholarship after the passing of Peg VanPatten. We also began announcing the scholarships at the school's new "Awards Night". Under the leadership of Ron Wyckoff, many new committees were formed, including the Historical Committee of which Pat Marsh Reynolds took charge. We also developed our mission statement and in 1996, moved the banquet to the new Family Life Center. Under President Jill Rubin's leadership, the association became active in the community with a float in the town's annual Fourth of July parade and the publishing of a newsletter. In 1997, we purchased a flog pole for the school under the supervision of Bud Schrier. Corky Adamson inspired us to establish the Hall of Fame that we initiated at Homecoming in 1998. Bob Betzer brought forth the idea of beginning the Honor Roll in 1999, in which alumni donating \$500 over a period of five years could make the "Honor Roll" without ever having to study for a test or receive an A. In 2000, we became more visible in the school by awarding a mini-grant of \$100 for an innovative project created by a staff member. In 2005, we followed suit by awarding a Stars For Tomorrow \$100 savings bond to two eighth grade students displaying the 6 Pillars of Character Counts. Both community banks participated by matching our funds to create the bond and also by serving on the selection committee. The school added a link of our official alumni association information to their school webpage. A wiki page was created to post the more informal information and photos for the association and allow for sending messages online. The Jack Fry Scholarship (perpetual) was started along with the concept of establishing "one-year" memorial scholarships for a memorial donation of \$500. In 2006 we printed brochures to place in local funeral homes to assist members with memorial contributions. In 2008 we purchased banners to display in the "new" middle school to support the character

education traits taught. The banquet was moved to the new building as well. Trevor Martin created a page on Facebook for online social interaction. During these 25 years we honored many groups at the banquet: football, basketball, cheerleaders, jazz band, and scholarship winners.