



Capital Day School

A Newsletter for Parents, Alumni and Friends

Frankfort, Kentucky

August, 1999

MRS. S. ROY WOODALL, Jr. Headmistress, Capital Day School (1961 - 1965)

William H. Averell, CDS Class of 1964

To a recent survey, I replied that my fondest memory of being a student at Capital Day School was to have had Mrs. Jane Woodall as my English teacher. I was a student of Mrs. Woodall in the sixth, seventh and eighth grade. She also served as Headmistress of Capital Day from 1961 to 1965.

Mrs. Woodall was an excellent teacher. She always motivated her students to want to learn new concepts and ideas. Mrs. Woodall exposed her students to a variety of educational experiences in grammar and literature that were both creative and challenging. She saw that her students developed a proficiency in the proper use of grammar so they could conduct research and write themes and papers.

Themes were usually one to three pages and they included an attached colored drawing to illustrate the theme's subject of discussion. Theme topics dealt with class field trip reports to historic places in Frankfort. Other themes allowed students to research their interests, such as in music or the arts, report on a place they might have visited or discuss a current event. In the seventh grade, I wrote a theme about my family's trip to Canada and New England and attached drawings of Royal Canadian mounted police and scenes of clipper ships in Boston Harbor. Through theme writing, Mrs. Woodall encouraged her students to discover what was important to them as well as to learn about their world.

Mrs. Woodall and the Capital Day School faculty inaugurated several changes in the school's curriculum in response to the school's desire to offer students a quality education. Faculty members Mrs. Nooe and Mrs. Mixson offered Upper School students comprehensive courses in introductory algebra

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Mrs. Woodall, continued

and general science, respectively. Kay Edsel and Linda Woodall established a French program for all grades. Carolyn Blackburn made American history an interesting subject by allowing students to conduct independent research projects. Dotty Berry and Alice Hume taught their students very creative and imaginative ways for completing their art projects. Two noteworthy art projects my class participated in were the "Little Red Schoolhouse" linoleum block designs and marionette stage shows. Everyone remembers Mrs. Brawner dearly for her devotion to her Lower School students in her teaching of introductory reading, spelling and writing skills. Mrs. Arnold held once a week music classes for each grade.

There were many extracurricular activities offered by Capital Day School when Mrs. Woodall was Headmistress. Students could work on the school newspaper, sing in the school chorus and play on the basketball team. There were also annual field trips to Fort Harrod, the Cincinnati Museum of Natural History and Blue Licks State Park. Furthermore, each student was given a certain amount of responsibility toward maintenance of the school and grounds. This benefited the appearance of the school, as well as fostered school spirit. Additionally, each student was given a specific task based on their talents and interests when the whole Upper School constructed and painted stage sets, rehearsed and performed Gilbert and Sullivan's "Mikado".

Many scholastic contests were held then. The Daughters of the American Revolution and the Franklin County Soil Conservation District sponsored annual essay contests. Several students entered this contest and many of them received honorable mention. Each spring the entire school assembled outside for the annual spelling bee. On Parents Day in May, the students and teachers would spruce up the school by planting flowers in front of the two red schoolhouses.

We would display our folders of our best themes with drawings, as well as art and science projects completed during the year for parents and visitors to see.

In her sweet and gentle way, Mrs. Woodall occasionally would quiz us to see if we were prepared to engage in a given day's class assignment or whether we needed help in learning certain subject matter. Whenever I have mentioned Mrs. Woodall to my former classmates, they all say how well she and the other faculty prepared them for going on to high school and college, and eventually into the business world. None of us should forget the times when she read poems by Robert Frost or played her dulcimer to us.

I realize that many of the academic programs that were established at Capital Day when Mrs. Woodall was Headmistress continue to be observed here today. For example, the school exposes students to reading, writing and conducting research papers starting as early as third grade. French, art and music are offered as part of the regular curriculum, as well as extracurricular activities similar to the ones discussed above. A good example of this is the Governor's Cup in which several CDS students have won recognition. Also, writing and maintaining of notebooks is practiced as a major way for teaching students how to organize their science course labs and assignments and track their progress in learning new mathematic concepts. The first Friday slips were sent home the first week that Mrs. Woodall was Headmistress.

The Woodalls lived in Frankfort's historically renowned Corner of Celebrities in the Morehead House. Mr. Woodall practiced law and later served as Commissioner of Insurance under former Governor Edward T. Breathitt. In 1967, the Woodalls moved to Louisville. Mr. and Mrs. Woodall sang in

organist Melvin Dickinson's choir at the Church of the Ascension in Frankfort and later in Mr. Dickinson's Bach Society in Louisville. The Woodalls have lived in Washington, D. C. since 1985. Mr. Woodall has continued his career as an attorney and insurance company executive.

For the past ten years, Mrs. Woodall has been the manager of the administrative office of the Smithsonian's Division of Cultural History (located in the National Museum of American History) and the general manager of its chamber music program, The Smithsonian Chamber Music Society. Her division includes everything from the American Indian program to the jazz orchestra - sports, popular culture, community life, etc. Mrs. Woodall's current job activities include being in charge of making arrangements for the Smithsonian's chamber music concerts and educational outreach program. She also sings in the chamber choir at All Souls Episcopal Church in Washington. From time to time Mrs. Woodall sings and plays her dulcimer at church and for special events in the Hall of Musical Instruments at the National Museum. She has made two recordings of gospel songs she remembered from her childhood in Kentucky with her third son, Claiborne, who plays guitar and mandolin.

Mr. and Mrs. Woodall have four sons - Sam, Brock, Claiborne and Garner. Two sons have families of their own. The Woodalls have been friends of my family for several years and we have periodically corresponded. Mrs. Woodall and I have exchanged Christmas cards over the years. I have enjoyed being acquainted with this family since my Capital Day School years a great deal. As shown in this article, she was largely responsible for ensuring that Capital Day School prepared its students well and for enabling this school to have the splendid academic reputation it has today.