



## SAINT JAMES SCHOOL

### From the Headmaster: Upcoming Retirements

March 2016

Dear Friends:

I write to you with expected, but nonetheless bittersweet news: at the end of the next academic year, i.e. in June of 2017, **Chick Meehan, Sandra Pollock, and Marty Collin** will retire from the faculty of Saint James School. Mr. Meehan has taught at Saint James for 47 years, and Ms. Pollock and Mr. Collin for 26 years. Combined, they will have served for 102 years, which is a remarkable record of leadership and devotion to the School.

On a personal note, when I came to Saint James in July of 1992, they were all here to greet me, and Ms. Pollock and Mr. Meehan both played a significant role in my appointment, Ms. Pollock as a member of the search committee and Mr. Meehan as Acting Headmaster. Indeed, Mr. Meehan convinced me to take the job and made a promise at that time to support me, which he has done ever since.



Chick Meehan came to Saint James in the second form in 1960, graduated in 1965, and returned to teach in 1969. (Photo from 1970.)

During his time on the faculty, he has taught math, been the dorm head in Onderdonk, coached football, basketball, and baseball, served as Athletic Director, Acting Headmaster, Athletic Director again, and now Senior Master for these past 21 years. He was, as we know, a particularly skilled and successful varsity football coach, helping our teams to perform well above our size as a school with his legendary running game. For this achievement, he was inducted into the Washington County Sports Hall of Fame.

Most importantly, Mr. Meehan loves Saint James, and he shows this love by his enthusiasm for the School and his faithful attention to his duties. He has had a wholesome and encouraging influence on two full generations of students, and models with his constant cheerfulness a grateful engagement with life. I cannot tell you how many times alumni, colleagues, parents, and current students have commented to me that he is "the nicest man" they know, and I always agree with them. He is particularly distinguished in his love for his wife and family, setting a wonderful example of a

balanced, moral, and happy life.

Sandra Pollock and Marty Collin came in 1990, Ms. Pollock as the head of a new program for tutorial support and Mr. Collin as an English teacher and the head of the drama program. (Photo from 1991.) In my first year, I appointed Ms. Pollock Academic Dean and eight years later Associate Headmaster, which was just an acknowledgement of what she was already doing. I appointed Mr. Collin Head of the English Department in 1993.



It is frankly daunting to attempt to describe to you all the good that Ms. Pollock does for Saint James. She established our core curriculum and has steadily improved the quality of our academic program every year since her appointment. She recruits, interviews, and supervises the faculty, and has now shepherded two Middle States evaluations. For 24 years, the two of us have led Saint James together, and she has been here to help me with every initiative and in every crisis with her keen intellect, remarkable work ethic, and clear, strong sense of what is right and wrong.

Ms. Pollock has not only made my job easier with her selfless and gifted leadership, she has also made it more enjoyable with her lively sense of humor and generous, loyal friendship. She has always had a particular concern for our younger students, most especially her beloved second formers, a section of whom she teaches every year, but also for students who need her academic support and motherly concern. She is an enthusiastic patron of the jv and junior teams, a gracious hostess to our girls in Holloway and to international students who need a place to stay on either side of a vacation, often waking up in the early hours of the morning to get them ready for the trip to the airport.

In truth, much of what Ms. Pollock does for us is hidden "behind the scenes," so I would ask the whole community of the School to take full advantage of her remaining time with us to notice what she does for us and to thank her. She has been especially gracious to give the School such generous notice of her retirement, as this will give us the opportunity to plan for the transition to come and to make the necessary appointments carefully.

Mr. Collin is an inspired teacher; in fact many students and alumni often describe him as their "favorite teacher." He is a great entertainer in class, at the microphone during meals, and on the stage, and it is no exaggeration to say that he has built our drama program essentially from scratch, from one act plays in the wrestling room to full blown musicals in the Kellam Auditorium. A published playwright, he writes a "play within the play" for us every Christmas and makes St. George and the Dragon a highlight of the year.

A department chair who teaches four classes, runs the drama program, and like

Mr. Meehan serves as a conscientious Weekend Duty Captain, Mr. Collin does a great deal for us; he is, as we know, especially talented, and shares his talents generously with the School on stage as I have described, but also on the fiddle or with his banjo at the cross country finish line or when gathering his students for class. Most of all, as he likes to say about others, "he makes us laugh," and often reminds us that we should not "say no; just think about it." As a result of his example, encouragement, and support, many students have come to love drama, music, and literature, and this is a priceless gift of joy and enlightenment for all of their lives.

So, as you can see, we will have much to celebrate next spring, and this will be good, as it will be an occasion for all of us to appreciate what real loyalty looks like and just how substantial the gift of teaching can be. To this end, I have asked the Alumni Council to give us their dinner on Alumni Weekend so that we can honor these three good people properly. The date is April 29, 2017, and I look forward to a very large company of grateful alumni, parents, and colleagues.

My thanks and best wishes, as always.

Yours faithfully,



The Revd. D. Stuart Dunnan, D. Phil.  
Headmaster



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