

Franklin history depicts changes and successes

Highland Park News Herald & Journal—Mt. Washington Star Review—Wednesday, Feb. 26, 1986—7A

By Kathleen Chew

Most people today do not remember how Franklin looked before the new building was built. A huge picture of the impressive, classic-looking building can be seen in Principal Ed Rosas' office, and strangely enough, in the student store, where the backs of the pictures are used for signs.

With the awe-inspiring building with its Ionic columns and "Palace of Versailles" look came many great accomplishments achieved by its students and an interesting history.

Opening on Feb. 7, 1916, Franklin began on the second floor of the old Vista Elementary School. Construction of the main building was delayed by heavy rains.

People opposed the building of a school for they thought this area would never adequately support a high school.

With Charles B. Moore as the first principal, 225 students and 15 teachers attended classes on the first day of school. A year later, enrollment rose to 350 and reached its climax in 1927 when 2460 pupils were recorded, even though the original structure was designed for 600 students maximum.

After the science building (now the math building) was finished, the students and teachers moved in on April 3, 1916.

The first student body election was held April 14 with Seaward Miller as the first president.

Finally on May 15, the ad-

ministration building was completed, and by June 16, the colors, blue and buff, were adopted as school colors.

Franklin's "Golden Age" dawned in the early 20s as the school gained notoriety through its success in competitions. The ROTC drill team started the streak by winning first place in the all-city contest in 1921.

In 1922, both the drill team and band won first place. Due to this achievement, Washington University and Jefferson University asked the Franklin band to represent them in the New Year's Day game in Tournament Park. Pennsylvania State University also asked the band to do the same in 1923 at the Rose Bowl, which had just opened then.

During the next two years, Franklin gained distinction in all

sorts of competitions—tennis, music (band, glee club and orchestra), typing and stenographic contests and drama.

Topping the list was student Don Tyler's victory in the National Oratorical Contest and the Constitution at Washington, D.C. on June 6, 1924. Members of the Supreme Court were among the judges and President Calvin Coolidge was the auditor.

Because of this national event, Franklin became the most publicized school in Los Angeles. The school's outstanding reputation led many families to settle around this area.

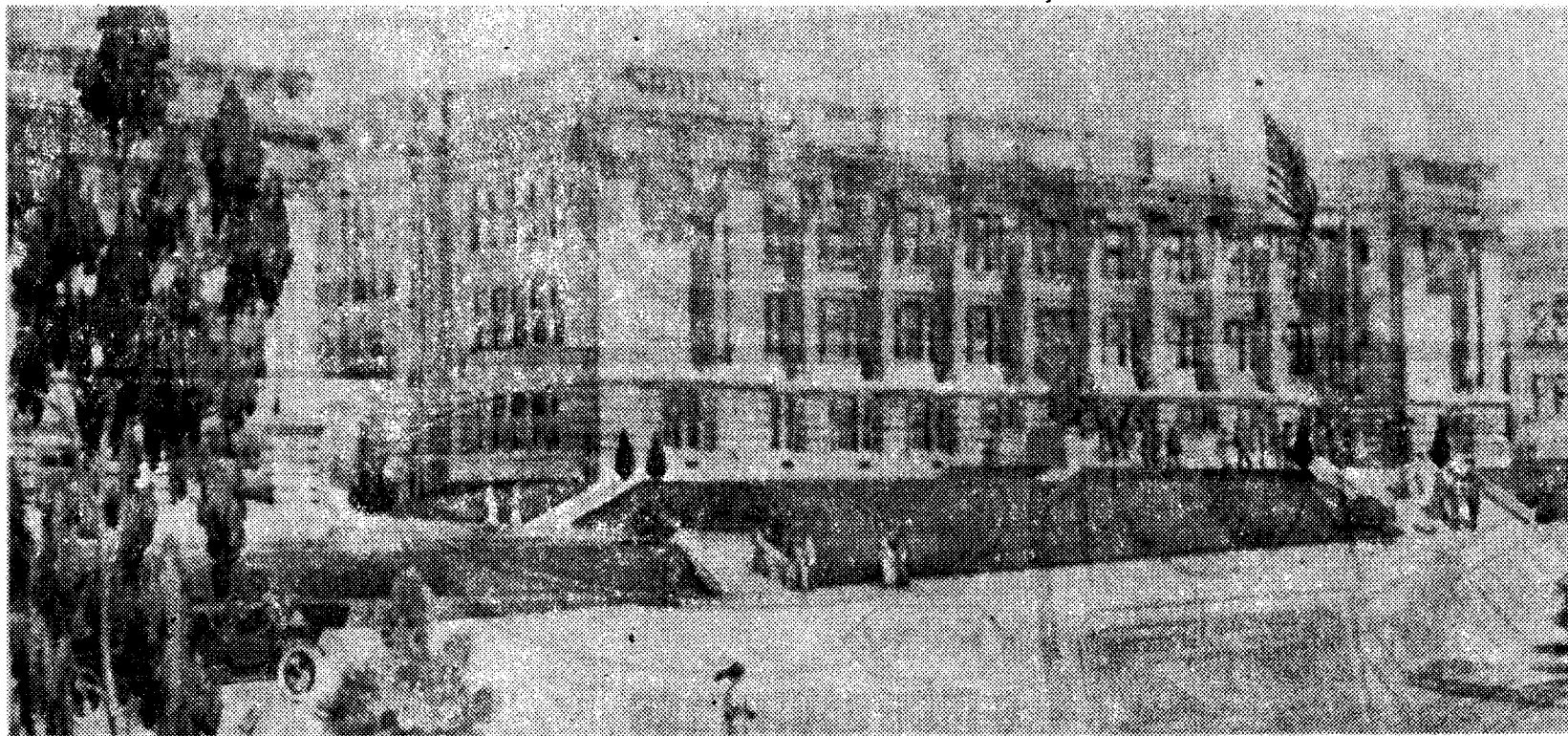
Adding more fame to the school, Lucille Goldsmith, another Franklin student following Tyler's example, captured first place in the same ora-

torical contest in 1934, which was a record achieved by no other school in the country at the time.

What do 1940 Wimbledon singles and doubles title-holder Bobby Riggs and two-time Olympic diving champion during Dr. Sammy Lee have in common with actor Alan Arkin. All were graduates of Franklin.

Many more Franklin graduates have gone on to be successful and famous people. Among them are Congressman Pat Hilling and Los Angeles Chief of Police Darryl Gates.

Alumi from Franklin have also made their mark in sports. Paul Salata played football for the San Francisco 49ers while "Lefty" Phillips played for the Dodgers in 1965.



Franklin of old

The first graduates of the Franklin High School attended classes in 1916 in the newly built administration building, which has

since then been replaced by a new structure.