

# **HISTORY OF SOUTH SIDE HIGH SCHOOL**

**Just before the Civil War the first public school was built in Fort Wayne on the se corner of Clay & Jefferson. [There is a list of all the public schools built in Fort Wayne from then until now.](#) Shortly thereafter the first high school began in a 3 story house on Wayne Street between Calhoun and Clinton. About 40 years later in 1904 the Allen Hamilton family donated the land of their estate to the public school system for the 3 story Fort Wayne High School to be built west of Barr Street and south of Lewis street. Again because the school became too small for the student body, in 1922 the largest 1 story high school building in the country was built on South Calhoun Street.**

**19 faculty members and about half of the student body moved to South Side. There were 20 other faculty members who came here from other schools. In 1947 it was decided to honor those faculty members who had been here for 25 years which included 9 from Fort Wayne High School and 7 others. Hence the “Quarter Century Club” was started. Those faculty members who started here in 1923 were added in 1948. Ora Davis was one of them. Through the years many others were added until now there are over 150 members.**

**[There is a list of them and their pictures are on the east wall in a room outside the Media Center.](#)**

**In 1972 at our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the AD and George Davis decided to honor our outstanding athletes and coaches. [There is a list of them on this website.](#) They were picked on their outstanding ability in one sport or being very good in 2 or 3 sports. We started out with about 50 members of our “Athletic Hall of Fame” and have been adding to it periodically ever since. [Their pictures are on the wall outside of the Athletic Office.](#)**

**In 1997 at out 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, George Davis thought we should honor our Distinguished Alumni. So, he got together with some of the older teachers and began to nominate candidates. He thought there certainly should be at least 1 from each class based upon criteria similar to the athletic hall of fame. Outstanding in their contribu-**

tion to the school, outstanding performance in the community, or outstanding achievement in their chosen profession. Also, being pretty good in 2 or 3 of them. We began with about 50 candidates and have added to the group several times. **There is a list of all of the distinguished alumni by their graduation years on this website. Their pictures are on the “Wall of Fame” just outside of the auditorium.** Prior to 1970 every class is represented except 4 {1924, 1925, 1938, & 1939}

In 2022 our school will be 100 years old. We have a little time to figure out what to do during that celebration.

## ORIGIN OF ARCHER

When Paul Hahn came to South Side High School as a senior in 1922, he was very influential in picking the school colors (Green & White). Paul spent his first 3 years of high school at Fort Wayne High School. His father was the music director at Emmaus Lutheran Church. Paul picked out the melody of the school song while in the living room of the family home on a xylophone. His father then supplied the accompaniment, and “Our School” appeared in the very first “Totem” in 1923. It is still our school song. Paul also wanted to call us the “Archers” but met opposition from the principal who wanted “Eagles”. Neither was chosen. So, the football and basketball players were referred to as “Green Clad”, “Green Men”, or “Gilbert’s boys”. Ward O. Gilbert was the first coach at South Side for several years. Some of the students mocked the school song during that period by singing, “To the school that has no “Eagle”, instead of equal. In the mid twenties Ora Davis, the athletic director, bought the football players green hooded sweat shirts. While observing practice one day through the cafeteria windows, a friend of his stated that, “They look like a bunch of archers”. At that time the cafeteria was located on the second story above the north entrance. The football field was north of the school building.

On December 7, 1928 the whole student body voted for the school mascot, (Archer, Eagle, or neither ). ARCHER won. In the yearbook of 1928 the football team was referred to as “Green men”, and the basketball team was referred to as “Archers”.













