

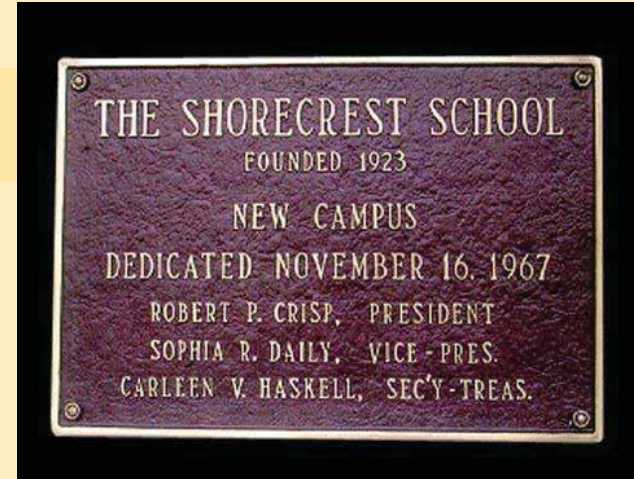


# The History of Shorecrest

# THE HISTORY OF SHORECREST

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***It was 1923. The first edition of Time magazine hit the newsstands. Roy and Walt Disney created The Walt Disney Company. Yankee Stadium opened its doors for the first time in the Bronx, NY. And on the picturesque waterfront of St. Petersburg, FL, a modest school was started with the intent of bringing quality education to the children of seasonal visitors. Then called Shorecrest Outdoor School, this unique academic institution would evolve into an acclaimed and venerable member of the St. Petersburg and Tampa Bay communities.***



Shorecrest Outdoor School, under the guidance of founder Florence Stern, opened its doors in September 1923, on leased waterfront property between 12th and 13th Avenues NE, just east of Beach Drive. Today the school's address would be 1200 North Shore Drive NE, the current location of the Shore Crest Condominiums, but in those early days, North Shore Drive, as we now know it, didn't exist. The school grounds could be considered somewhat exotic, as they met Tampa Bay on their eastern edge and were shaded all around by expansive banyan trees. At that time, St. Petersburg was a town of approximately 600 permanent residents, but as the Florida land boom of the '20s began to sweep the state, tourists and investors arrived in increasing numbers during the winter months to vacation and to purchase property.

Although the year-long enrollment was small, the number of students increased substantially when winter visitors, fondly known as "snow birds," wanted a school that would enable their children to continue their studies for the brief time they were in the area. During baseball spring training season, the children of players for the New York Yankees and St. Louis Cardinals were Shorecrest students. Thanks to mild winter weather, the school was truly an outdoor facility, featuring open-air classrooms, known as pergolas. The pergolas had blackboards, long tables and an overhead covering of chicken wire woven with Spanish moss.



In 1927 a significant change that would set the tone and philosophy for modern day Shorecrest occurred when Emma Vinal purchased the school and became Headmistress. Mrs. Vinal steered Shorecrest into becoming a full-time educational institution. The school, though still with a small enrollment, accommodated students upwards through high school. During World War II the school provided a high-school-diploma curriculum in an effort to support military personnel and their families who were housed in what is now the Vinoy Hotel. Her daughter, Carleen Vinal Haskell, joined Mrs. Vinal at the school. Both women strongly believed in the educational philosophy that academics should be accompanied by exposure to the arts and participation in physical activity in order to develop a well-rounded child. After her mother's death in 1948, Mrs. Haskell became Shorecrest's third Headmistress and continued molding Shorecrest into a respected and forward-thinking school.

By the mid-1960s the school was flourishing in its quaint waterfront location on North Shore Drive. By then, Carleen Haskell had convinced her son Bruce to follow in the family tradition and become a teacher at the school. It was at this time that the school faced a serious threat to its existence. The development boom of the '60s led to escalating prices of land. The property where the school had been located for its first 43 years was owned by Sophia (Yi) Daily. In 1966 Mrs. Daily

informed the Haskell family that an offer had been made for the property that was in her opinion too good to refuse. Mrs. Haskell and her son Bruce could close the school or go find property and funding which, at that time, seemed doubtful. The Haskell family made the decision to search for property and funding in order to continue operations. The search led Carleen and Bruce to Bob Crisp, a local developer whose daughter had attended Shorecrest Outdoor School. Mr. Crisp agreed to donate 6 acres of undeveloped land on First Street North and Mrs. Daily provided the monetary backing needed to finance construction of a new campus. The school was ready just in time for students to arrive in the fall of 1967. The school was re-named Shorecrest School.



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The grounds would eventually include 14 classrooms, the Daily Auditorium, the Administration/Library building and the Mini-Gym building, with two classes each in grades K-8.

The Florida statewide teachers strike in 1968 precipitated another major change for the school. Parents, dissatisfied by the state of public education in Pinellas County, came knocking at Shorecrest's door. What was a school of 130 became a school of 250 and then a school of over 300 in the span of two years. The Shorecrest School enrolled primarily local residents and the

“snow bird” students had a minimal presence.

Still a proprietary school, Shorecrest had become an important asset to the educational options for parents and children in St. Petersburg and Pinellas County. In the early 1970s, a group of parents met with the Haskells and encouraged them to expand the program into a high school. Carleen and Bruce considered a variety of options. They finally decided to expand into a high school but also to turn the school over to a Board of Trustees and allow Shorecrest to become a not-for-profit, independent school. A

parent group agreed to take on the financial responsibilities, Bruce Haskell was named Headmaster and thanks again to Bob Crisp, additional land was donated to allow for the needed expansion.

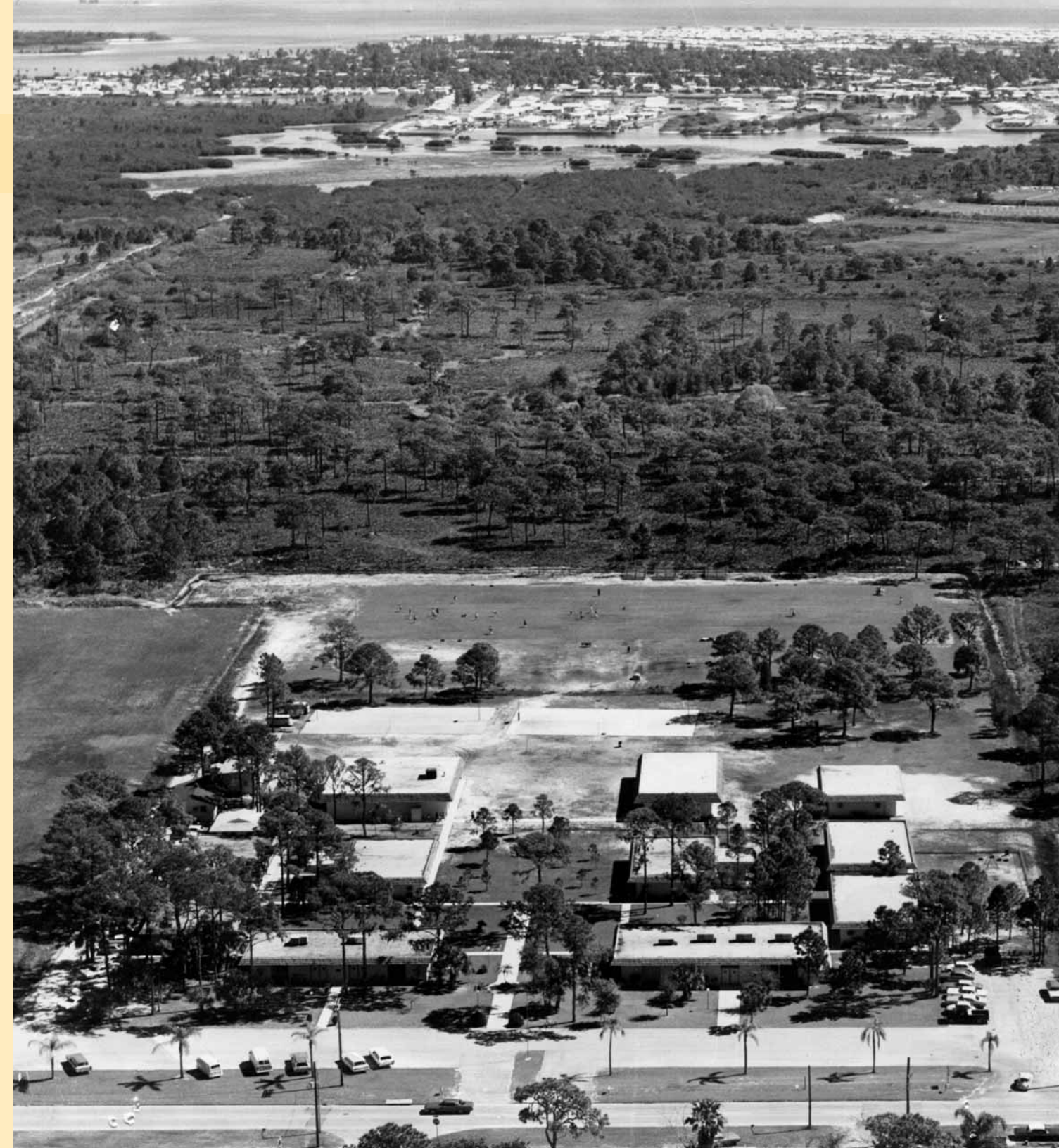
In 1973 the school assumed the name Shorecrest Preparatory School and an exciting new era began. Forty students enrolled in the first 9th grade. They would eventually become the Class of 1976, the first graduating class since the pre-war years.

Bruce and his faculty added one grade a year to the high school. Two classroom buildings, a gymnasium, which would later be named the Crisp Gymnasium, and a football field with lights were added to the expanded campus. Additionally, the Board of Trustees and administration, acknowledging the importance for regional endorsement for high

schools, applied for accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) to accompany the school's existing accreditation by the Florida Council of Independent Schools (FCIS).

Shorecrest flourished under Bruce's leadership. He attracted outstanding faculty members who established life-long relationships with students and their families. The school became well known for the high level of academic excellence and well-rounded programs offered to the students. During the 1970s, iconic members of the faculty like Mary Booker, Janet Root, Phil Hayford and Brad Moore, to name a few, joined the Shorecrest faculty.

The changing needs of families in the early '80s gave rise to the next refinements to the complex of the school. To assist the growing number of dual income and single parent families, Lower School Principal Mary Booker started an Extended Day Program. Mrs. Booker, with great foresight, also added an Early Childhood program for 4 year olds, and



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eventually 3 year olds, enabling the school to serve a child completely from pre-school through high school graduation.

After a lifetime spent at Shorecrest, either as student, faculty or administrator, Bruce Haskell stepped down as Headmaster in 1985. John (Jack) Ordeman succeeded Mr. Haskell, maintaining

the school's focus on academic excellence as well as the development of children as unique individuals and conscientious citizens.

Mr. Ordeman, who was initially employed as an interim Headmaster while the Board considered who would succeed Bruce Haskell, remained at the school for four years.

In 1989, Lower School Principal Mary Booker became Head of School after a nationwide search by the Board of Trustees. A part of the Shorecrest faculty since 1972 when she was a fifth grade teacher, Mrs. Booker led the school towards the 21st Century, helming projects to enhance both the curriculum for students and physical plant of the school.

One of Mrs. Booker's



significant achievements was the development of the Arts and Humanities Department that has become a hallmark program for Shorecrest. The foundation of this new department was the venerable Picture Lady Program, started by parent and eventual Department Chair and Trustee, Janet Root. Picture Ladies and Gentlemen have encouraged art appreciation with their presentations to Lower Division students for over 30 years. The Music Parent Program, using the same format, focused on music appreciation. Supplementing the standard curriculum, the Cultural Enrichment Program initiated in the 1980s sponsored offerings in all areas of the arts via on-campus performances or off-site field trips. The theater program became both a source of pride and joy for the entire Shorecrest community. Mary Christian, Director of Theatre in those early years, guided generations of students including the current Director of Theatre, Bill Leavengood '79, in musical and drama presentations.

Mrs. Booker and her Board used creative thinking and ingenuity to provide facilities for the growing enrollment and programs being offered by the school. Mary, Board members, faculty and alumni enjoy telling stories about the acquisition and renovation of kennel buildings from Derby Lane to act as additional classroom space. Mrs. Booker, Admissions Director Diana Craig, and Trustee Bob Willis will never forget their



midnight ride from Gulfport to Shorecrest on top of the realtor's office from the development of Pasadena Country Club. The building continues to serve as the centrally located Administration and Admissions Office.

A capital campaign, Shorecrest Builds, accompanied a five-year plan for important upgrades for the campus. A key person in working with Mary Booker and the Board during this period of facilities growth was the School's Finance Director/Assistant Headmaster, Jeff Pratt. He helped to oversee the addition of an arts quad along with a science and technology building to the Upper Division, as well as a new Middle Division campus north of the Crisp Gym. A new fifth and sixth grade building, later to be named the Sher Center, replaced the old wooden buildings that ran alongside Charger Boulevard.

In keeping with Emma Vinal's educational philosophy that academics should be accompanied

by exposure to the arts and participation in physical activity, a new sports field and eight lane track were completed in 2001. The state-of-the-art performing arts facility, the Raymund Arts & Media Center, opened in 2002. And the beautiful Lower Division Building was added to the Morean-Manning campus in 2004.

Mary Booker's vision and leadership steered the school into the 21st Century. During her tenure as Head of School, the Early Childhood Center was created; expanded facilities and faculty capabilities were put in place; a vibrant arts program took flight; and the already outstanding college preparatory curriculum was taken to a new level. Mrs. Booker retired in 2005, after 34 years at Shorecrest.



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The Board of Trustees began a comprehensive, worldwide search for a new Head of School. The search led them to Michael Murphy, then of Pace Academy in Atlanta. Arriving in 2005, Mr. Murphy brought not only a wealth of experience but also a new perspective to Shorecrest. That perspective was a driving force for the creation of an inclusive strategic plan for the school that gave structure and timelines for more physical campus enhancements and the development of curricular innovations throughout the school. The development of The Learning Center to support students and coordinate enrichment and remedial programs for teachers, tutors and parents had a campus-wide impact. In addition, the Service Learning Program, already important at Shorecrest, was strengthened with the naming of a Director of Service Learning to support the school-wide efforts to serve and learn. During this time Shorecrest became a Relay For Life school, to benefit cancer research, and student leaders stepped up to lead this community event. The use of technology expanded into every classroom, and the Global Scholars Initiative began. Community input in the strategic plan guided the Board to initiate capital campaigns to build Landy Hall and renovate the Science and Technology Building for the Upper Division. The Board then led a campaign to build the Middle Division Arts and Science Center and followed with an exciting campaign to replace the original Crisp Gym with an Athletic Center which houses a state-of-the-art indoor sports facility to complement the existing outdoor fields.

Since its beginning, Shorecrest has been a place of learning that consistently strives to meet the needs of the students and their families. Just as the Shorecrest of the past had outdoor classrooms that were literally without walls, the Shorecrest of the present has developed programs that have encouraged students to pursue opportunities far beyond the physical campus.

Shorecrest is a story of a family committed to providing children great educational opportunities. The Haskell's passed their vision on to thousands of other families, educators, trustees and, most importantly, students who keep the legacy alive every single day.

As the Shorecrest community celebrates the 90th Anniversary of the school beginning in the 2012-2013 school year, we can give thanks for all those educators, families and students who built the solid foundation on which the school stands and look forward to the coming decade as we race on to 100.

