



January 31, 2011

## Pride & Tradition: A Letter from Evert Marsh Topping, BL's first Headmaster

In June of 1846 BL's first Headmaster, **Evert Marsh Topping**, wrote the following letter to Princeton Professor **John Maclean**. Topping had a new way of teaching boys and he tried to explain his methods to Dr. Maclean. His philosophy of stressing each individual boy's needs is still practiced here at BL today.

Here is part one of his long letter to his former Princeton colleague:

*Dear Sir:*

*In my reply to your note enclosing a copy of your letter to the Trustees. I intended to intimate to you respectfully but distinctly that the instruction in Greek which I have given during the last 4, or 5 years, which my judgment still distinctly approves, and which I am bold to say has been comparatively successful, I cannot relinquish for that which I understand you to prefer.*

*I have during my connection with the college nearly an equal experience in both kinds of instruction -for five years as Tutor and Professor, to Freshmen and Sophomore classes. I taught Greek as it wont to be taught and as I suppose you wish me now to teach. I differed only in using more particular and exact in the method than others. During this whole period, (let me ask you to consider the fact) I was troubled by disorder in the recitation room, not a few times but at all times, by groans, and other willful noises, sometimes by misconduct requiring the discipline of the Faculty. This had become a kind of sophomore usage, and I found it established when I became a member of the faculty. I found myself unable to produce any interest in my recitations sufficient to prevent it. After 4 or 5 years trial, I began to invite the intellect of my class, by adding to the mere translation and parsing of the lesson, such other instructions and exercises upon the passage read as had interested my own mind and which I thought it no presumption to teach the class. I did it neither from pedantic nor ambition, but because I was interested in it myself, and felt important to teach it to my class. I began to teach as I have taught ever since. The effect was immediate. The sophomore class underwent an entire change - from being notoriously unruly and inattentive, they became almost at once attentive, docile, and studious and from that day to this, during my last 5 years, I have not had trouble in the recitation room.*

*You once requested me to put my views on this subject on paper - permit me then to state a little further my reasons and the history of them. It has always been my object to teach the Greek language, not its literature as you affirm. I have used the latter in strict subordination to the former and chiefly as a means to that end. The great obstacle which we both meet is want of exact, elementary and grammatical knowledge on the part of our students. Bad preparation and habits acquired at school. For 5 years I tried to remove it by constant elementary teaching as rigid as I could make it, but with indifferent success. Thinking I could do better with a small number, I took a Freshmen class of 12 or 14 members. I explained to them minutely how they should learn the grammar. I pointed out to them at each recitation where they had failed. I rehearsed the advantages of grammatical knowledge. I saw again and again conviction in their very eyes. I used in short every means in my power to induce them to repair the fatal deficiency of elementary knowledge, but I failed to persuade even the best students among them either to commit with perfect exactness or secure what they had learned. If they had been my pupils at School, I would have compelled them to learn as I wished. In college I could only persuade and mark them. After this I commenced my present instruction by pointing out the exact meaning of words in Greek and often in English by comparing synonymous words by an exegesis of remarkable passages, and occasional criticisms founded upon words thus prepared. I excited a true intellectual interest in this state of mind I could turn them back with advantage to the elements. I could and did make them feel what they only partly believed before that grammatical and verbal knowledge lies at the foundations of all attainments in language. I have in most cases actually made my classes acquire as much elementary knowledge, and these things, quickening to the intellect, besides, as I could ever do when I gave my whole attention to it....*

## BL Family Golf Outing



The Boys' Latin Golf Outing is scheduled for Friday, April 15<sup>th</sup> at the Elkridge Golf Course – just blocks from BL on North Charles Street. Once again the event will start in the morning and after golf lunch will be served. The cost will remain the same as last year - \$150 per golfer (\$600 per foursome.)

We are also hoping that members of the BL family will consider helping the tournament by sponsoring a hole. The cost is \$150. Please make checks out to the BL Alumni Association along with the names of your foursome.

Mark your calendars and spread the word. The golf outing is open to everyone in the BL family!

## Annual Fund 2010-2011



The Boys' Latin Alumni/Development Office would like to challenge everyone who was taught by J. Marshall Bruce to consider doubling from last year their 2010-2011 annual fund UNRESTRICTED gift in his honor. For those of you who didn't participate last year we ask that you consider an UNRESTRICTED gift this year in memory of a great BL Headmaster and friend.

We hope most of our Alumni from 1960-1984 will remember Mr. Bruce and – “THINK BL FIRST!”

## It's Academic

A trio of outstanding students from Boys' Latin School competed with teams from Huntingtown High School of Huntingtown, and Perry Hall High School of Baltimore, on *IT'S ACADEMIC*, the nation's foremost high school quiz program. The competition was spirited, and the match was won by Huntingtown High School. The program will air Saturday, February 19, at 10:00 am on WJZ, Channel 13.

Boys' Latin's team consists of **Mitchell Horning '11**, **Brendan Owens '12**, and **Will Fedder '12**. The faculty coach is **Adam Osborn**.

## Alumni Notes

**Fred Bianco '67** was featured in a recent *Baltimore Sun* article. The article reported on menswear shops in the Baltimore area and how they hope to keep their customers dressing for success. To read the story click on <http://www.baltimoresun.com/features/>

**Mike James '81** is the Director of Catering/Convention Services for the Hyatt Regency in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Mike from Maryland in August. He writes he is "loving the 300 days of sunshine a year."

**Lucien Giordano '99** visited campus last week. Lucien is currently working at a Chinese school near Hong Kong as the college counselor. He is hoping to set-up a program with BL and other area schools that will allow BL students visit his school in an exchange program. For more information on Lucien's school go to [http://www.alevelnh.com/about\\_en.asp?id=67](http://www.alevelnh.com/about_en.asp?id=67)

**Alex Lyons '07** is a senior at Bucknell University and is playing on the Bison lacrosse team. Alex is majoring in civil engineering and engineering management. He was recently named to the Patriot League Academic Honor Roll.

**Pierce Haugh '10** is a member of the varsity volleyball team at Stevenson University. A member of Boys' Latin's 2008 championship team, Pierce was a three year starter for the Lakers, a team captain his senior year, and earned All-MIAA honors in 2010. Stevenson plays Division III volleyball and is a member of the Capitol Athletic Conference. The Mustangs are presently 4-0, opening the season winning the SUNYIT Invitational in Utica, NY.

**Scott Dyer '10** made Dean's List at the University of Southern California this past semester. Scott is preparing himself for the senior men's division of the U.S. Figure Skating Championships. *The Baltimore Sun* featured Scott in an article last week. Read the story at <http://www.baltimoresun.com/sports/olympics/bs-sp-figure-skater0127-20110126.0.1570532.story>. *The Baltimore Sun* reported this morning that Scott came in 11<sup>th</sup> place (out of 20 overall skaters.)

## BL Athletics

The Laker basketball team traveled to Glenelg on Friday night. BL played the best team in the MIAA "B" Conference tough all game but faded in the final minutes and lost by 11, 66-55. **Wells Stanwick '11** had a career night with 27 points.

On Saturday the Lakers played a snow make-up game at Gilman. BL took an early 15-9 lead but could not hold on and eventually lost to the Greyhounds 59-43. **Casey Rees '13** led the Lakers with 15 points. Wells Stanwick added 14 points.

BL's varsity basketball team plays three games this week: Tuesday at 5:30 hosting Friends, Thursday at Curley at 4:00, and Friday at St. Mary's at 5:45.



In wrestling the BL grapplers participated in this weekend's Overlea Invitational. Each Laker battled hard to take home one of the prized possessions offered to any top four finisher. Bringing home a fourth place medal at the 103 lb. weight class was **Hunter Cotsoradis '14**. Also, taking home a fourth place medal in the 112 lb. division was **Danny Shaifer '14**.

Claiming third place finishes for the Lakers were 119 pounder **Frankie Johnson '13**, 130 lb. captain **Michael Floccare '11** (pictured left above with Coach **Drew Haugh '77**), 135 lb. captain **Alex Malinowski '11** (pictured above left with Coach Haugh), and 140 lb. wrestler **Tyrelle Johnson '11**.

Other Laker wrestlers, although not placing, scored valuable team points, to help the team to a third place finish in the 23 team event.

## Homecoming 2011

Homecoming 2011 will take place the weekend of April 29th and 30th.

The Homecoming luncheon on Friday the 29th will be followed by a varsity lacrosse game against MIAA rival St. Mary's of Annapolis. **At the luncheon BL will recognize and honor all of the school's valedictorians from the past.** We hope to have a great crowd.

The x1 and x6 graduating classes will be celebrating their reunion years.

The Brevard Street Alumni will once again have a reception dinner in the Alumni House on April 30th, 2011. They will be joined by the Class of 1961 (their 50<sup>th</sup> Reunion Anniversary) and by the Class of 1966 (45<sup>th</sup> Reunion.)

The Maryland Scholastic Association (MSA) 1966 Lacrosse Champions are also invited to the Saturday night reunion dinner.

Mark your calendars for the entire weekend.

## Lacrosse Coach Wanted

The BL Athletic Department is looking for a 6<sup>th</sup> grade head lacrosse coach. If you are interested and desire further information about this position, please contact Joy Kirk in the Athletic Office – [jkirk@boyslatinmd.com](mailto:jkirk@boyslatinmd.com).

## 80 Years Ago

BL traveled to Roland Park to play host Gilman in basketball. The Gilman gym was jam packed for the game which was low scoring throughout. However, the Latinists were able to carve out an 18-12 lead going into the final stanza. Gilman came back to tie the game but could never obtain the lead. The final score was 21-19 in favor of BLS.

**Jack Evans '33** led the BL attack with 8 points. All four of the other BL starters also scored: **Rogers Bartlett '31** 5 points, **Charles Kelly '33** 2 points, **Mickey Darrell '31** 4 points, and **Charley Slaughter '34** 2 points.

## 75 Years Ago

BL's basketball team defeated host Gilman School in basketball 29-9. The Latinists' defense held Gilman to just two baskets the entire game and led the entire way. **Edgar Spilman '36** and **Oscar Nevares '36** led the maroon and white offense with 9 points each. Forward **Dick Green '36** added 7 points to the winning cause.

## 10 Years Ago

The varsity basketball team hosted the St. Paul's Crusaders. BL was eager to avenge their earlier season 50-39 loss. The Lakers surged out of the gate in the first quarter and took a 12-4 lead going into the second period. The second period was the complete opposite. The Crusaders outscored BL 15-3 and took a 19-15 lead at intermission. The SP lead was increased to seven after three periods and the Lakers eventually succumbed 44-35.

**Ryan Eby '02** led the Lakers with 11 points. **Pat Mahoney '03** chipped in 6 points. Nine different Lakers scored in the game.

**“In all courses the methods are simple and direct. An appeal is made to reason, and self-reliance is encouraged. The aim is to give a boy not only a certain sum of knowledge, but the mental training which, after all, is true education.**

**“The School may well be called conservative, for it is always concerned more with what is best than with what is new.”**

**BLS 1940-1941 School Catalog**



**The 50th Anniversary Year on Lake Avenue Gala will be celebrated on April 2, 2011. Save the date!**