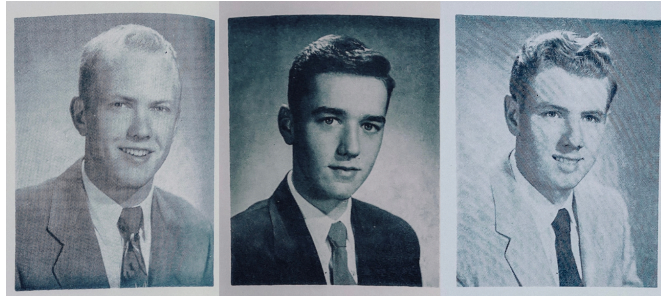


Finished Yet Beginning

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“Finished yet beginning.” So read the motto of the 1955 Paradise Highschool yearbook, containing the photos of three 18 year old youngsters, who now stood before us, 67 years later. Their names were Daryl B Lichty (Skip), Wilmer Burkhart, and J. Ronald Burkholder (Berkey), and a fourth gentleman, who was a few grades younger, named Bob Hershey. Their old high school had been through quite a few changes: from a small high school, to a much larger elementary school with a significant building addition, to sitting empty for a few years and a possible demolition, to finally a non-profit organization called The Factory Ministries. Together we strolled through the halls, explaining the work of The Factory: the advocacy, community events, market, and the programs for kids of all ages. But most importantly, our emphasis on empowerment and creating an environment where our participants can achieve self-sufficiency.



After we took them through the halls, explaining the work we do, and the purpose of some of our recent renovations...the four gentlemen then took us on a tour of memories. The offices and meeting rooms that now existed stood where once locker rooms had resided, and the parking lot now had been the grass lot that supported the feet of students running back and forth for the laps they had to do as ‘punishment’. Skip remembered: we had to do a ton of laps, but we realized if we just ran past the window, we could sit at the other



end of the bushes and after a few minutes run back, and the teacher inside the classroom would think we were running the laps.' Reminiscing continued: on the days of old, the tussles with teachers, the scrapes, and adventures, and ultimately, the unbroken friendship that they have shared for the past 67 years. 'In those days there were a lot of laughs, and a lot of respect', remembered Berkey.

Their highschool had been through so much change...but thankfully the possible demolition in 2009 had never gone through. Spaces hold memories. Preservation of historical buildings are not only important for the structure itself (the architecture, history, and education), but also for the stories that it contains. And from what Skip, Wilmer, Berkey, and Bob were able to share, it was quite the significant amount of stories the walls of The Factory held.



'Finished yet beginning' read their motto. And what a beautiful reminder it was of the work that is now accomplished in the building through the lives of the many participants that are supported here, as well as a testimony of all the students that came before. Life is made up of chapters closing, and new ones beginning. Sometimes we are grateful for a chapter to end, and other times it is with sorrow that we say goodbye. In both the sorrow

and the joy, however, the people matter, and their journeys matter. And it is with that in mind that we carry on the work here at The Factory Ministries, through the beginnings and the finishes, the celebrations and the tears....because everyone's journey matters.

