

IHS 1953 Priscilla Burnham

April 2018

By Aileen Carney Sweeney



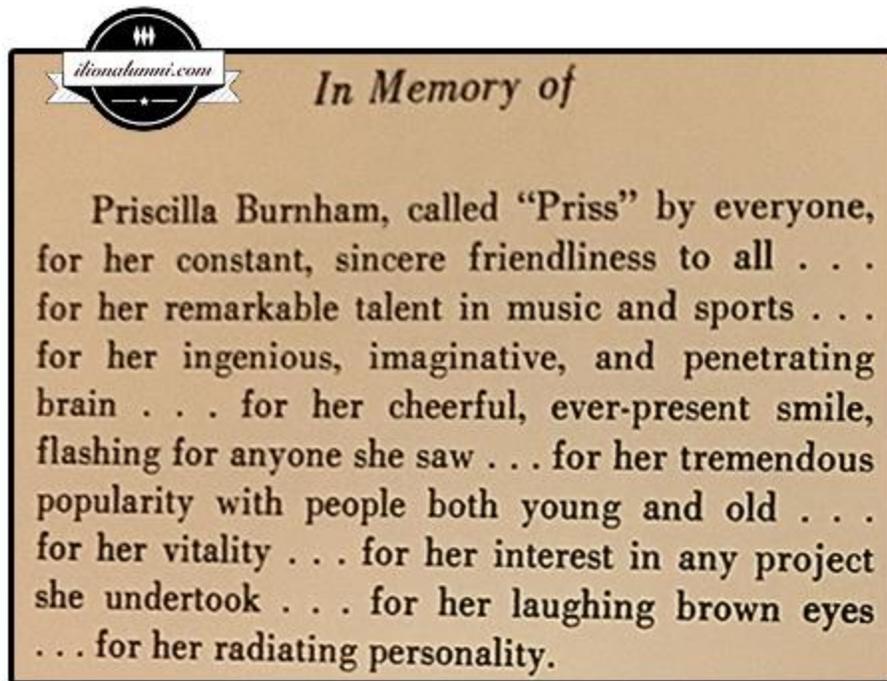
Priscilla Jane Burnham

1953 Yearbook Dedication

"Priss"

Two awards have been presented, annually, to graduating seniors. The awards are in memory of IHS Class of 1953 member, Priscilla Jane Burnham. The awards are the Priscilla Burnham Memorial Leadership Sports Trophy (awarded to a female student) and the Priscilla Burnham Memorial Prize for Instrumental Music. For those recipients, here is a brief history of the impact young "Priss" had on the community. Sadly, Priscilla, the talented athlete, had to have her leg amputated due to her illness.

The 1953 Yearbook contained a memorial for Priscilla who died in October 1951 in her Junior year. The text of the yearbook memorial provides the reasons why she is remembered, annually, for over sixty years.



In Memory of... Priscilla Burnham, called "Priss" by everyone, for here constant, sincere friendliness to all... for her remarkable talent in music and sports... for her ingenious, imaginative, and penetrating brain... for her cheerful, ever-present smile, flashing for anyone she saw... for her tremendous popularity with people both young and old... for her vitality... for her interest in any project she undertook... for her laughing brown eyes... for her radiating personality.

The 1953 Yearbook also contained a memorial for former classmate, [Diane Monteau](#), who died, at the age of 10, as the result of being struck by a car, in September 1946.



Miss Burnham, School Leader Dies in Ilion

Ilion — Miss Priscilla Jane Burnham, 15, of 55 W. Rand St., Ilion High School junior, died Oct. 22, 1951, in Ilion Hospital, after a long illness.

Miss Burnham was born Feb. 17, 1936, a daughter of Opal Studebaker Burnham and the late Lamont Burnham. Her father died Sept. 22.

Miss Burnham was a member of the First Presbyterian Church and the choir of that church, Marigold Triangle, Daughters of the Eastern Star; Rho Chapter of Beta Chi Sorority.

She was president of the Ilion High School Student Council and a

member of the school's orchestra and varsity choir. She served as treasurer of the junior class and was junior editor of the Golden Quill, school yearbook.

Surviving are her mother, a sister, Nancy; two grandmothers, Mrs. Harry Burnham and Mrs. Hallie Mikesell, all of Ilion. The funeral will be at 1:00 Thursday from the Applegate Funeral Home and at 3 from the First Presbyterian Church with Dr. Paul Wagner officiating. Burial will be In Armory Hill Cemetery. - [October 23, 1951 - Utica NY Daily Press](#)

Members of Marigold Triangle, Daughters of the Eastern Star, met the night of October 24, 1951, in the Masonic Temple and then proceeded to the Applegate Funeral Home to conduct a farewell ritual for Priscilla.

Priscilla Burnham Award Recipients

The first year these awards were presented was 1952, which was only 8 months from the time of Priscilla's death. Below is an incomplete roster of the recipients of these awards. The Memorial Athletic Trophy began to be presented at the annual Block-I dinner once female students were allowed to attend that ceremony. If you were a recipient and would like your name added, please send on the title and year of your award.

Year	Memorial Athletic Trophy Leadership Award	Memorial Prize for Instrumental Music
2011	Marrisa A. Maldonado	Tyler J. Esford
2010	Rachel Stegemann	
2009	Stephanie A. Lachacz	Lauren E. Malone
2008	Erin E. Sweeney	Nicholas R. Jones

2006	Heidi M. Sterling	Isaac E. Anyango
2005	Katherine Murphy	
2004	Krysten S. Vivyan	Kaylynn E. Iglesias
2003	Elaine M. Goldin	Andrew A. Boyd
2002	Stacy Woody	Travis M. DeJohn
2001	Maggie L. McCann	Jana L. Barrett
2000	Kathryn Adams	Michael A. Kineke
1997		Sarah M. Eisele
1984	Nancy Fusco	Bruce Phillips Jr.
1974	Pamela Weller	Kathleen Morris
1961	Barbara Stubbs	John Shaw
1960	Paula Dulak	Linda Schafer
1956	Sally Kerr	Charles Mateson
1955	Pat McCormack	Curtis Gilbert
1952	Betty Sutton	Nancy Merchant

Senior Awards - Honor Deceased Alumni

Many of the senior awards remind us of the extraordinary achievements of deceased alumni. The Priscilla Burnham awards celebrated the short but remarkable life of 'Priss'. Her legacy and achievements live on in those that have had the honor of being named recipients of awards made in her memory.

Priscilla's Father



Lamont H. Burnham
Ilion Industrial Arts Supervisor/Teacher/Coach
1941 Yearbook

Lamont H. Burnham, Industrial Arts Teacher, Coach Died Unexpectedly

One month prior to Priscilla's death, Lamont H. Burnham IHS 1923, her father, died in his home following a brief illness. His obituary appears below.

Lamont H. Burnham, 47, of 55 West Rand St., former industrial arts instructor in Iliion High School and for several years its track coach, died unexpectedly in his home yesterday following a brief illness.

He was born in Iliion, May 19, 1904, a son of Harry and Jesse Brown Burnham. He was a graduate of Oswego Normal School [in 1926] and attended University of Michigan. His marriage to Opal Studebaker took place in Slippery Rock, Pa., Dec. 17, 1926. He was superintendent of the Martin Automatic Fishing Reel Company for a number of years. Mr. Burnham lived in Iliion all his life and was a member of the Presbyterian Church and of Iliion Lodge 91 F&AM. He was for a time chairman of the Village Republican Committee.

Besides his wife, he leaves two daughters, Nancy and Priscilla Burnham, all of Iliion. The funeral will be at 2 Tuesday afternoon from the Applegate Funeral Home with the Rev. Paul Wagner officiating. - [September 23, 1951 - Utica Daily Observer](#)

History of Shop Classes

Lamont H. Burnham, Industrial Arts Teacher

The first shop classes, formerly known as woodworking shop classes, began about 1915 in the Stone House that was an annex to the old Morgan Street School. The first shop had 24 workbenches. Equipment included a machine saw, miter saw and little else. Frank Bradley was instructor and pupils were taught to make sleeve boards, hall trees, small tables, tabourets and tea wagons. One of the early students was Lamont H. Burnham. Mr. Burnham returned to the Iliion High School, in June 1929, to be Bradley's assistant at Iliion High School. When Frank Bradley died unexpectedly in 1932, Lamont Burnham was named permanently in his place.

Classes expanded and equipment was replaced under Mr. Burnham's direction annually. The location of the shop was changed several times before it ended up occupying three rooms at the high school. Equipment that was added included an electric saw, jigsaw, grinder,

drill press and lathes. The rooms provided a combination of drawing bench and millwork. Besides woodworking, several other courses were available such as electricity, drawing, pottery, bookbinding, plastics and general information on textiles.

During the early 1940s, several students became expert in building model gliders and motorized model airplanes. Students also assisted in constructing sets for drama club plays. They built a scoreboard for the football field and ticket houses at entrances to the fields.

The "1941 Mirror" was dedicated to Lamont H. Burnham, Industrial Arts Supervisor and Miss Flora Welden, mathematics teacher

Lamont Burnham's school related extra-curricular activities were coaching the track team, the boys and girls rifle teams and the cross-country team. He was also heavily involved with the Boy Scouts.

As part of the World War II war effort, he began a defense-training course for adults. Courses offered were drafting, machine shop and mathematics-science in conjunction with blueprint reading. "The Iliion Sentinel" newspaper reported on June 19, 1941 that students of previous defense training classes found employment in factories in the area. This helped to alleviate a partial labor shortage in shop work. At that time, Officials expected that about 60 men would enroll for the summer session. By November 1942, Lamont Burnham met with the Business and Professional Women of Herkimer County in order to recruit female students for the courses.

"With schools located in Iliion, Herkimer, Frankfort and Richfield Springs, for the training of both young boys, men and even women, much delay in getting the nation's war materials flowing to the men in the service has been overcome by the training they received at these schools, is the opinion of many of the instructors in the schools."

Lamont Burnham resigned his Iliion High school Industrial Arts position, in December 1943, after serving there for 15 years. Substitute teachers would fill his school position until June 1945 when John A. Storm, Yonkers, filled the post of Industrial arts teacher and

assistant coach. John Pugh, a graduate of Iliion High and aircraft worker, was chosen to fill the vacancy in the Iliion High School in August 1944. His duties included the regular industrial arts work, and teaching mechanical drawing, a pretechnical subject that was to be used for the newly added technical course. Mr. John Pugh had four years' experience in teaching at Katonah. He was a graduate of the Industrial arts division of the Oswego State Normal College. He filled the post from which Lamont Burnham resigned. Stephen Suhanchak continued as Instructor in machine shop and its affiliated subjects, making two full-time instructors, on the staff, as it was formerly. - [August 10, 1944 - The Iliion Sentinel](#)

When Mr. Burnham resigned in 1943, he accepted the position of plant training director in the Herkimer Tool and Model Works. By March 1944, Mr. Burnham's success with the Emergency Defensive Training Courses earned him an appointment to the NYS War Manpower Commission. Roland Morgan, Supervisor of Vocational Training of the State Department of Education, assigned Burnham to work in the Southern Tier, with the area director of the War Manpower Commission, to cover the coordination of all State and Federal vocational training facilities in that section of the state.

BACK

Created and maintained by [Aileen Carney Sweeney](#) - Class of 1974

Digital Image Copyright & Copyright © 1997 - 2018 ilionalumni.com
Modified April 7, 2018