

LIBRARY they ain't what they used to be



Mercy High's Media Center collection of 300 periodicals, 60 titles of which are on microfilms, absorb the attention of Mary Ann Melino of St. Andrew's parish and Mary Jo Holly of St. John of Rochester parish.

By CECELIA VIGGO

If your high school memories resemble playbacks of an Andy Hardy "flick", full of cheerleaders, football heroes, and not much else, then you'd better be warned before you visit your child's high school.

Sports and cheerleaders remain, but there also is an unparalleled seriousness about education among both students and teachers.

Three trends evidence this new concern:

Today's high schools encourage students to study independently. Many schools arrange schedules to allow students more free time for individual research; others, among them Our Lady of Mercy High School and Notre Dame in Elmira, have switched to modular scheduling. Modular system is rather complex, but its basic effect is to vary the daily schedule of both student and faculty, and to allow the student greater liberty in managing his own time.

High school courses tend to be interdisciplinary in approach. A check of your child's schedule may indicate a course on black history, non-Western religions, mass communications, or world cultures. These broader courses draw upon information from many disciplines; world cultures, for example, might include findings from

history, art, music, literature, religion, and anthropology in its scope.

High schools are affected by the revolution in technology. The presence of audiovisual equipment, in high schools, from tape recorders to movie cameras, and micro-film machines, is changing the ways subjects are both taught and received.

Changes in high school education have made a great impact on the high school library.

The high school library has had to respond to the increased demands on its resources from students involved in independent study and research. Librarians have had to broaden the scope of their collections, to accommodate the interdisciplinary approach of today's teachers. And it is in the library that audio-visual equipment is usually housed, and always catalogued.

A survey of high schools in the diocese points up several library innovations.

In order to serve the needs of increasing numbers of students in individual research, many high schools, among them Cardinal Mooney, Nazareth, St. Agnes, Mercy, and Notre Dame, have created resource centers.

These "centers" are usually renovated classrooms, furnished with individual study carrels, and containing special materials

in one subject, or two related subject areas.

Study materials might include reprints of magazine articles, books, pamphlets, tapes, slides, film strips, and audio-visual equipment geared to independent study: small viewers, cassette tape recorders and record players equipped with headphones.

Father John Whitley, C.S.B., librarian at Aquinas Institute, comments that, especially in subjects of a controversial or social nature, "there is a wealth of material available." He adds that it is the responsibility of the librarian to find this information, and make it available for reference in the library.

Thus, a check of our high school collections might reveal anything and everything from the "Encyclopedia of Philosophy" to the "International Library of Negro Law and History", to pamphlets on pollution and drug abuse.

All diocesan high schools are putting an increasingly larger amount of their budgets into the purchase of audiovisual materials. All high schools have the basic equipment: film and slide projectors, overhead projectors, films, film strips, tapes, records, and tape recorders.

Even a small school, like De Sales in Geneva, with an enrollment of less than 500, keeps 11 kinds of projectors.

Some schools are tending to invest more money in equipment, geared to individual study. Brother Hugh H. in charge of the audiovisual department at Cardinal High School, feels that the trend in a-v equipment will be directed toward individual use.

For this reason, Moon started to invest in cassette tape recorders and film cameras. Both make use of ridges for tapes and film are easy to operate. Schools are interested in student and faculty produced audiovisual materials. Notre Dame High School in Elmira, for example, owns television camera and equipment for making video tapes for student and faculty presentation.

Our Lady of Mercy in Elmira is a diocesan high school whose library exemplifies trends in high school education.

Fortuitous circumstances and an enlightened administration and staff have enabled Mercy to revamp and revolutionize existing library facilities.

When McAuley College merged with the high school, Mercy's librarian Mary Esther, supported by principal Sister Mary, moved the high school library into the college library.

The merger doubled circulation to 28,000 volumes and also enabled the high school to purchase



Kearney High library's periodical room finds Grace DeLeo (seated) of St. Cecelia's parish checking out materials for Joe Burgio of Holy Redeemer and Jeanne Barton of Holy Spirit.

Both faculty and students at Our Lady of Mercy High School library can make their own audio-visuals in the Media Center production room. Liz Simmons (left) of St. James parish makes a set of slides; Jan Wischmeyer (seated) of St. Helen's plans her next film shooting, while Sister Esther, librarian, discusses lamination of posters with Sue Long of St. Ambrose.



Photos by ARTHUR P. FARREN