The performing arts program at JBU has a long history. Since JBU opened in 1919 the students here have been putting on plays. In the early years this was usually a Christmas play. Then in 1950 a new tradition began: the senior play. Over the years the seniors have performed a variety of shows, from “Mystery in Blue,” a comedy preformed in 1952, to “Sweethearts,” a musical preformed in 1965, to the mystery “Stranger in the Night” in 1971. The senior play became a form of competition as classes constantly tried to improve upon the play from the previous year so that they could say that their class had the best senior play. As the 1957 yearbook states: “The play’s the thing…by which all Seniors jeopardize their grade point average and good health.” These plays were performed in many different places depending upon the year. Many took place in the Activities Building, and after renovations to the Cathedral, the Jones Recital Hall.

Besides the senior play JBU actors could also show their talent in the Broadcasting Play, which has appeared off and on throughout the years, and was sponsored and acted out by broadcasting majors.

Another form of acting at JBU occurred twice a year on Intramural’s Day. This once-a-semester event divided the entire campus (professors included) in two teams, the Blues and the Golds. Most of the day was spent in athletic activities, as the teams tallied up their points for winning. The last event was an impromptu play, and usually the team with the best play ended up winning the Intramural’s Day.

In 1972 there was a group called the Street Theatre, consisting of students who wanted to act. In the early 1980s JBU had a CAUSE ministry called Icthus, a student drama group that presented the gospel to the community. The group preformed on campus, at schools and churches in town, and in other states. Another performing CAUSE ministry was the puppet ministry which shared God’s Word to children through the use of puppets.

JBU has also hosted a talent show almost every year since the mid 1950s. The talent show originally was only open to freshmen and gave them a way to perform for their new peers; however, over the years it has become a campus—wide event. Mock Rock, a lip syncing competition, that often includes dancing and theatrical talent, has been around for a while and is still very popular today. JBU has also had the freshman play in 2008 and 2009. The senior play became open to all years sometime in the early 90s, and still remains so to this day.
Insights
Quotes from John Brown, Sr.

On a recent trip to California I made my home for several weeks in the beautiful city of Long Beach...One morning I stood and looked off across the waters, I saw a flock of gulls working above the waves. Probably to those who are uninstructed in the facts of the ocean, and especially to those who have never fished from boats, the activities above the water of this flock of gulls would have meant nothing; but to me the gift of vision to see clearly every such a tragedy of the sea.

The activities of those gulls simply meant that a school of large fish were out for their breakfast and were feeding on the small fishes who, in their frantic effort to escape death from below, would spring out of the waters to find that death was awaiting them from above. In other words, the gulls feed when the larger fish from below feed; and all but literally, the small fish who sought to escape death from below were chased into the opening mouth of death above.

Standing there in that early morning hour I had been trying to piece together in my mind, and trying to form some decision as to just what the explanation was of the heartbreaking tragedy into which the common people of America have been plunged. And when I say common people, I mean the great massed of the middle classes who, out of honesty and integrity and industry, had turned this nation of ours from a wilderness into something of an earthly paradise. I had faced the fact that millions of these people, comfortably situated yesterday, were today literally stripped of everything that they had once possessed. Amazed, and dazed, and broken, tens of thousands of them have seen their small fortunes disappear and homes pass from them; and from apparent security and comfort of the days just gone, they have passed into insecurity and poverty to all but literally face death. In other words the great sea of common life was astir and death was everywhere.

-From Sharks, Gulls, and Little Fishes

Don't Cut Across

How about cutting the campus? Won't the lawns be beautiful with little winding paths cutting them in two. What’s the matter with us? Can’t we walk around? The sidewalks are made to walk on not to look at. I know all of you boys like big muscles—just think of the muscles you do develop by walking around the sidewalk instead of crashing through the hedge.

You girls think of how it will reduce you to get a little extra exercise and you won’t mind walking a little farther. It will almost be a pleasure.

-1941 Threefold

ECHOES OF THE PAST

Excerpt from the 20 of June 1941 Threefold Advocate

We Have “Real School Spirit”

Someone is always informing us we have a lack of school spirit. But just what is school spirit? Is it being right “Jonny-on-the-spot” to every ballgame or other school sport to yell ourselves hoarse for our side? This is part of it but not all. We realize there are many people who don’t especially enjoy being rough and rowdy like some others, but that’s not a sure sign if no school spirit.

We must be loyal to the school—to be ready and willing to uphold the ideals that are set up for us. We must really be willing to pitch in and do our share of work. If each of us would do this the more loyal students wouldn’t have so much loaded on their shoulders just because they’ll carry it.

When you are asked what school you are from, tell them and make them believe you are really proud of it. Don’t just rather slowly fade out of the picture. Really talk your school up—the ideals, the threefold education, what Bro. Brown is doing for young people, and you’d be surprised at how many would be wanting to become a part of this student body. Do we have what it takes? If we don’t let’s get it and really put the things over. Let’s get some real honest-to-goodness school spirit and make things come to life.

Milestones

November 8, 1950
The latest Moody color film was shown in chapel. This movie, produced by The Moody Bible Institute, featured Dr. Moon preaching on the spiritual aspects of WWII.

November 17, 1972
The JBU cross country team ended the season by attending the NAIA National Cross-Country Championship. 450 runners were in attendance.

November 19, 1982
A “Lollipop Week” was proposed to take place on campus. Every time someone was nice they would get a lollipop. This event would include both faculty and students. The goal was to have the most lollipops by the end of the week.