



The News Journal/CLINT DANTINNE
 Clint Dantinne, director of Mount Pleasant High School's Broadcast Learning Center, gets ready to hang an anniversary banner.

School: Groups will join students and faculty to celebrate anniversary

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 the first year school districts were formed in Delaware, he said.

Mount Pleasant School moved in 1865 to a two-story stone building nearby at 1010 Philadelphia Pike, which was then called the Philadelphia Toll Pike, he said. Bill and Pat Ward now live in that building, which features seven bathrooms and is 5,500 square feet inside, much too big for the empty nesters, who are looking to sell it.

The Wards have a photograph of the school and its students taken in the early part of the last century.

"It's obviously the same building," Bill Ward said of the photo, "although there's been additions and changes to it."

The school moved for the second time in 1932, to what is now Mount Pleasant Elementary School on Duncan Road. The high school has been at its current site on Washington Street Extension since 1958, so the 50th anniversary of that building is coming up in a few years.

mentary School is linked to the high school, the anniversary celebration involves both schools, Woodson said. Groups such as the Friends of Bellevue State Park, the New Castle County Chamber of Commerce, the Bellefonte Civic Association and the Brandywine School District Board of Education also are taking part.

Dantinne's research also revealed that the Duncan Road building didn't offer a high school diploma from 1932 to 1950. "So if you wanted to go on as a junior or senior, you had to go someplace else," he said. Fifty-eight students graduated in 1950, the first year a graduation ceremony was held there.

The current high school owes much of its legacy to the staff and student body at its former site on Duncan Road. Its Green Knight mascot was created there, as was the design of the green-and-white football uniforms, which were modeled after Michigan State University. The Green Flash newspaper and

Green Leaf yearbook got their starts at what is now the elementary school, Dantinne said. The current Mount Pleasant building also has plenty to brag about. It has played host to a variety of celebrities over the years, Dantinne said. Actor Hal Holbrook performed his one-man Mark Twain show there. Singers Mahalia Jackson, Linda Ronstadt and Jackson Browne appeared there, as did the rock group Chicago.

New research into the school's history has prompted Mount Pleasant to form a historical society, an alumni association and a hall of fame for distinguished students and staff.

Woodson points to Dantinne as the catalyst for helping to make much of the anniversary year initiatives possible.

"I'm just amazed at how much he's done," Woodson said. "I've always said you don't know where you're going until you know where you came from, and this is just fantastic."

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ANNIVERSARY EVENT

Mount Pleasant High School is planning 175th anniversary events for the new school year, beginning with a kickoff community flea market Sept. 10. Most of the activities are being planned for Oct. 14-15, which is homecoming weekend. The festivities include music, tours, a block party, drama, art and entertainment. Visit the school's Web site at www.mphsknights.com/175/index.aspx for more information.

The history of the school goes almost hand in hand with the history of the Brandywine School District, Dantinne said. "It was called the Mount Pleasant Special School District," he said, sitting in one of the high school's administrative offices. "The superintendent of the district actually was in this building."

The Brandywine School District was formed following desegregation.

Because Mount Pleasant Ele-