

**THE ROEPER SCHOOL CALENDAR**

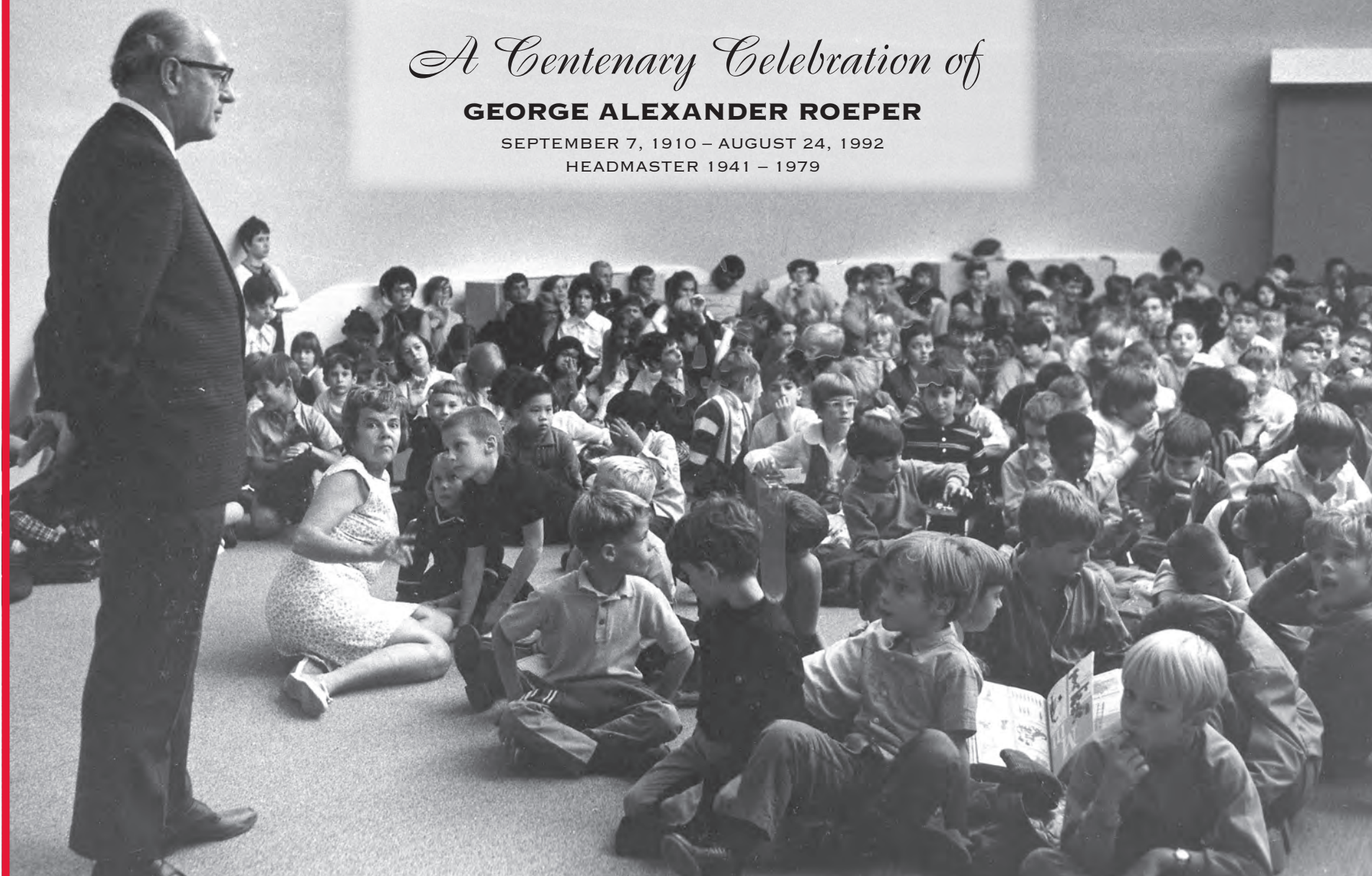
**2010/2011**

*A Centenary Celebration of*

**GEORGE ALEXANDER ROEPER**

SEPTEMBER 7, 1910 – AUGUST 24, 1992

HEADMASTER 1941 – 1979





*This calendar is dedicated to my late husband, George Roeper, who has been so many things in the life of so many people. He was the co-founder of this school, the father of my children and the husband with whom I shared many happy years.*

*His great impact on the school is still visible and strong after all these years. My hope is that the Roeper community will remember him every day of this year, which is the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth.*

*Our children, Tom, Karen and Peter, join me in this tribute to their father.*

*In loving memory,*

*Annemarie*

*Annemarie*



In this calendar, we pay heartfelt tribute to our school's visionary founder, George Roeper, who would have celebrated his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday this year.

When George and his wife, Annemarie, opened the doors of the Roeper School to students in 1941, they threw wide open the doors to the future. With wisdom, care and foresight, George and Annemarie crafted an educational philosophy that would provide a transformative experience for children while at the same time improving the condition of our country and our world.

At Roeper, you will often hear community members talk about being “Roeperian.” This word has multiple definitions. For me it describes someone who — like George — speaks his mind, refuses to accept the status quo, understands that different times call for different measures, lives in the present, and looks toward a global, interconnected future.

George once said,

*Traditions are loved because they give the comfort of the familiar, but they are also dangerous because they stifle progress, they inhibit healthy change, they smother courageous speculative thinking...No one should feel too comfortable in traditions. They should feel instead open-minded for change, unprejudiced about a radical departure from the old, and undogmatic about new measures.*

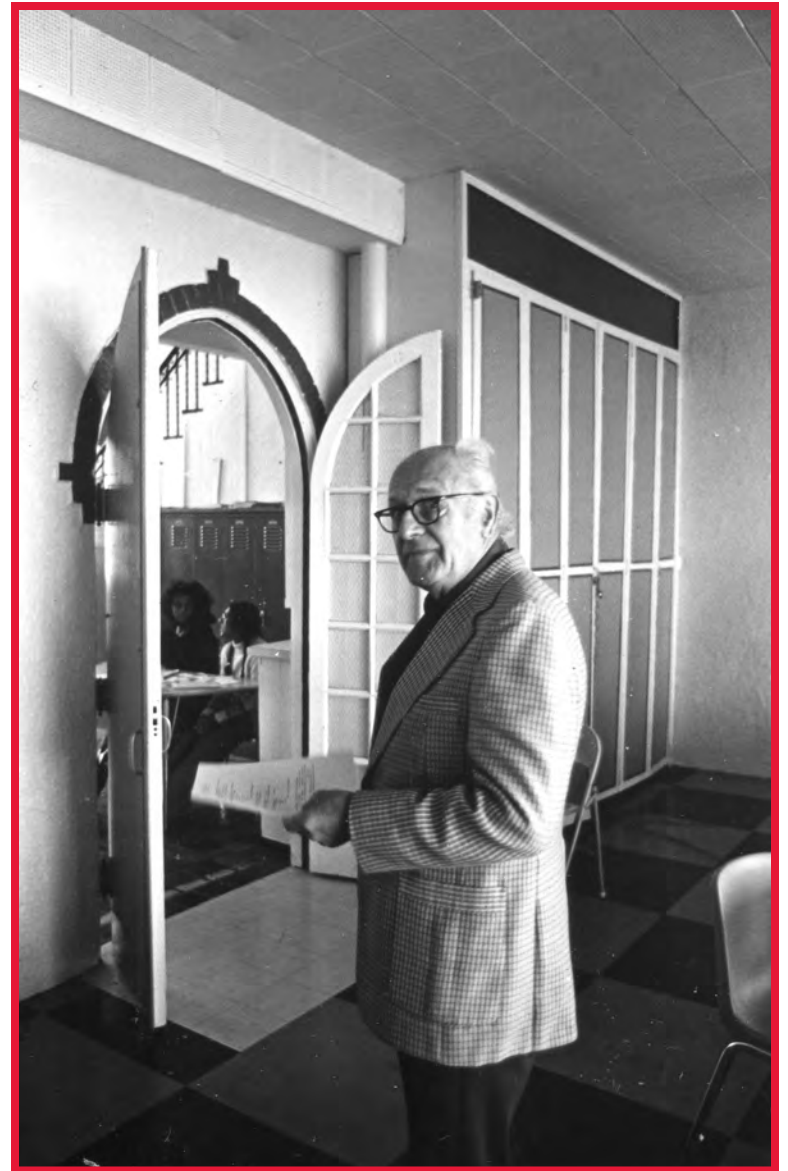
Even today, through his palpable legacy, George Roeper continues to encourage us all to walk through those open doors into the future.

Please turn the pages of this calendar, and join us!

Fondly,

*Randall*

Randall Dunn  
Head of School



*All quotations are from George Roeper unless otherwise indicated.*



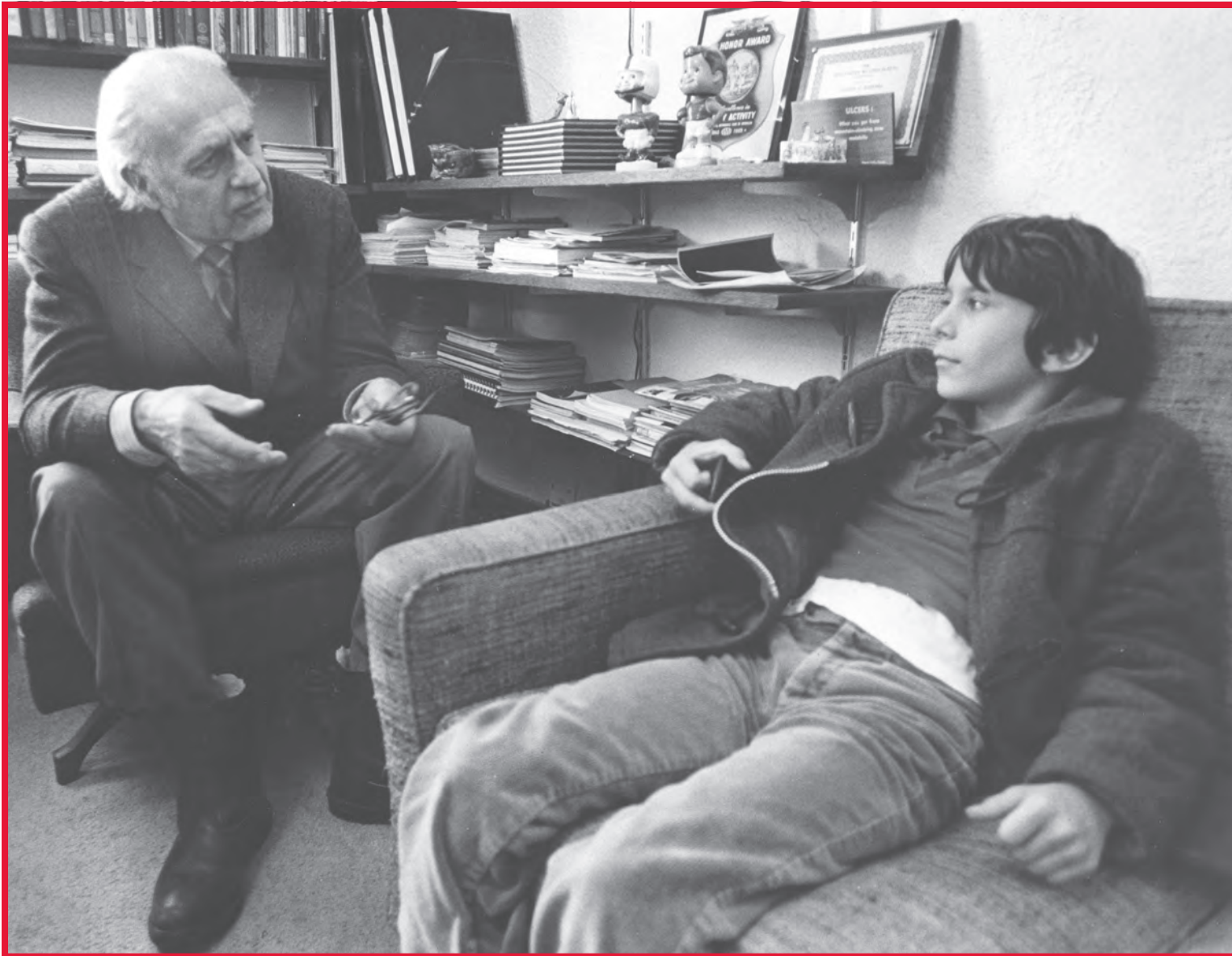
*Creativity seemed to be the ingredient needed, in addition to intelligence, to form the gifted personality.*

*The truly gifted person, it appears likely, is one who is capable of revising what is known, exploring the unknown, and constructing new forms. He will tend towards the novel and the speculative, in addition to having the ability to learn the known, the problems already solved, and the answers known to be acceptable.*

*The child who focuses not only on knowing what is already discovered, but also on discovering what is yet to be known, is the kind of child we strive to identify, and develop through working with him.*



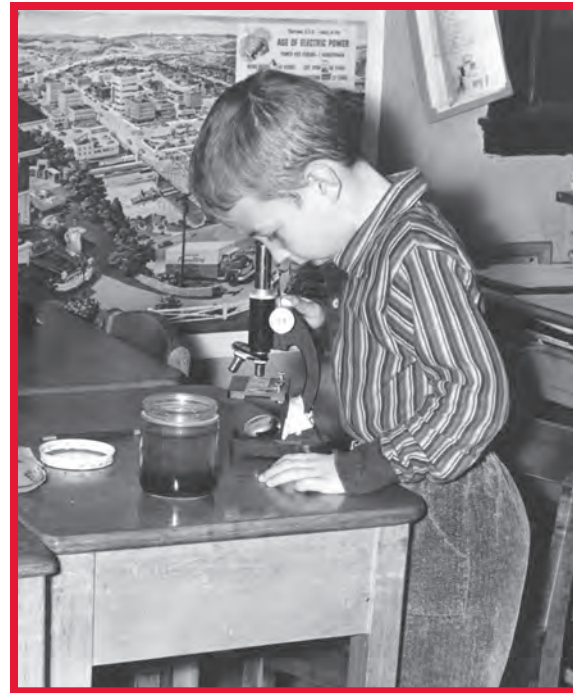
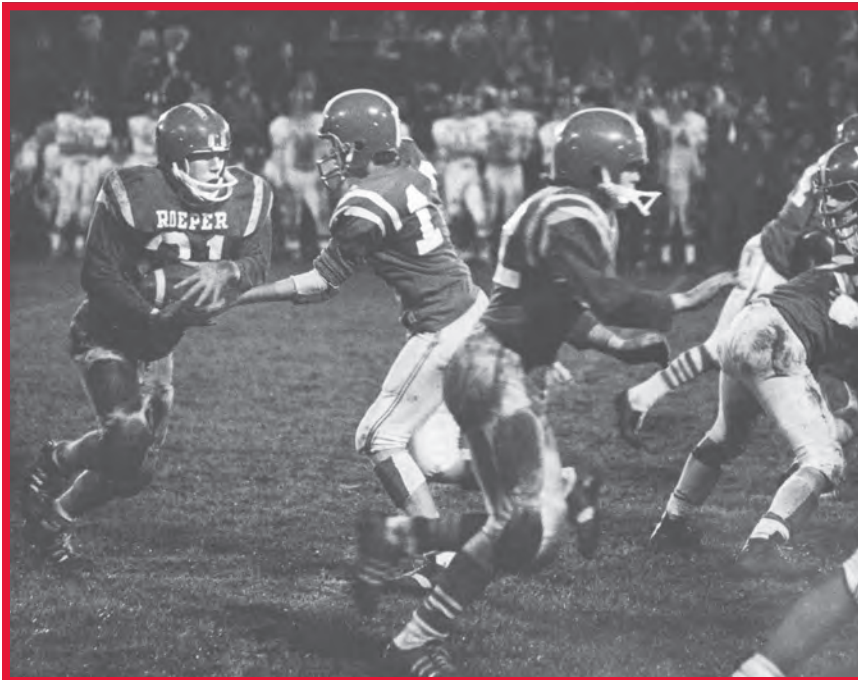




*Nothing is more worthy of research, understanding, and improvement than the means to encourage children to achieve full development as creative, intellectual beings for the satisfaction of their own and mankind's aspirations.*

THE FINE PRINT:

In his resumé, George explained that this educational perspective was at the heart of his life's mission. He served this idea not only as a headmaster, but also as a lecturer, writer, teacher, and friend.



*Work hard and play hard.*







*We must teach you new perspectives, to see things in new combinations, to foster an open-mindedness that permits easy detachments from existing concepts ...*



*... and yet requires a definite commitment to a deep need to understand something, to master a technique, to render a meaning.*

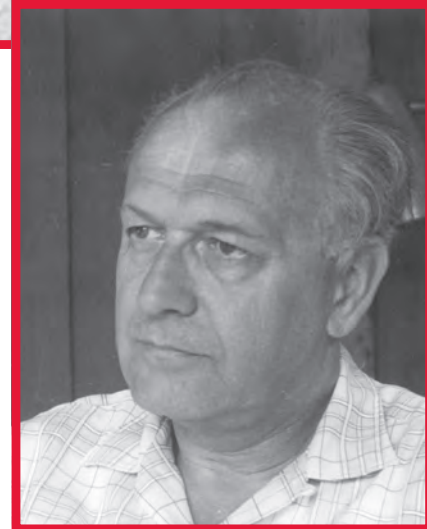




*We all knew, even by third grade, that there wasn't going to be a right answer.  
And we could certainly feel from the way that Mr. Roeper listened  
that each of our opinions was of great interest and value to him.  
But it was shown to us in his responses that we should wrestle with these dilemmas  
not just with our minds but with our hearts.*

*Mr. Roeper seemed to push not at our cleverness but at our souls.*

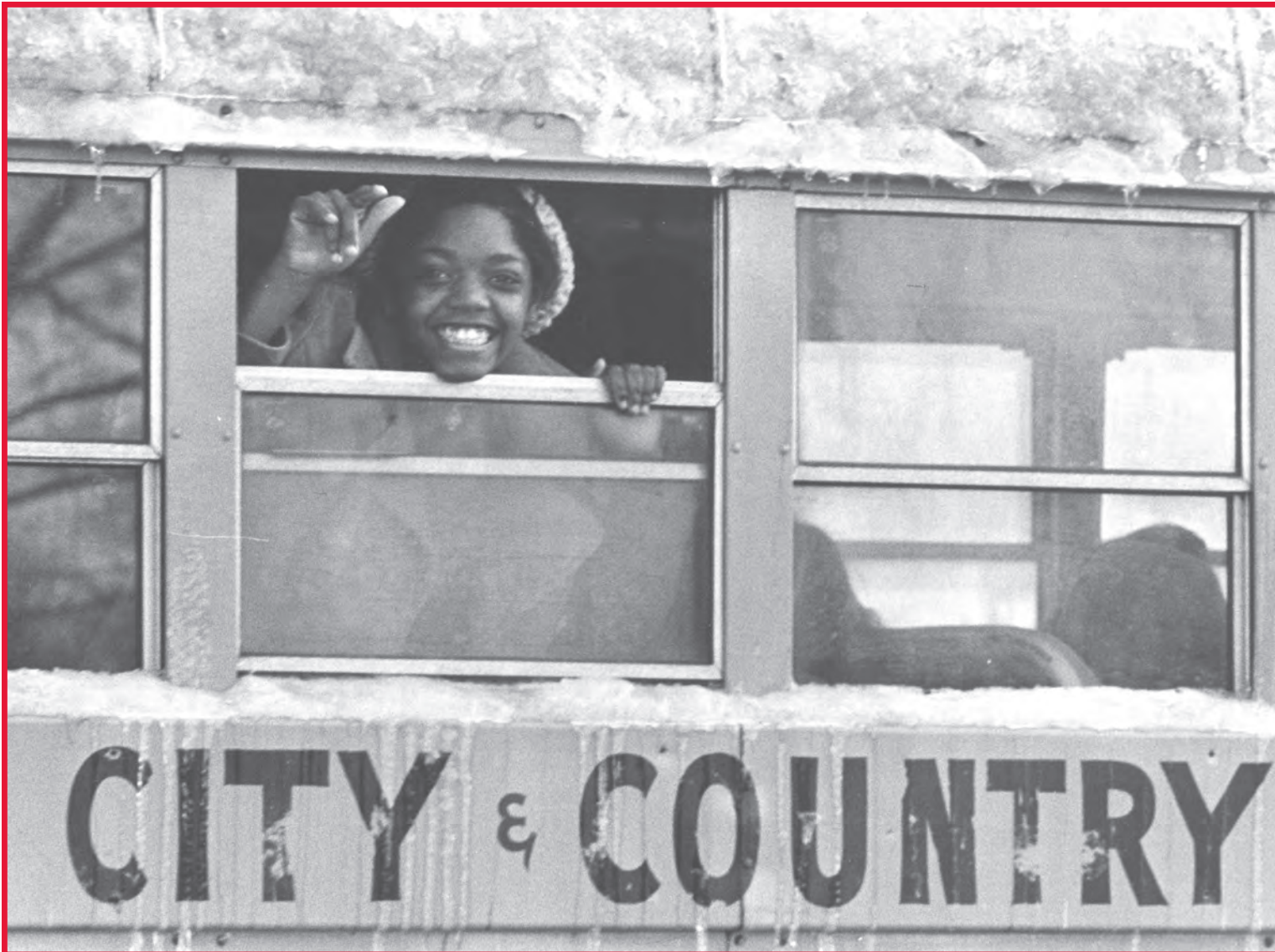
*— Ruth Seymour '72*



THE FINE PRINT:

George got to know every one of his students. His door was always open, and he regularly invited kids into his office to seek their opinions. He taught a class called Human Relations in which he posed questions to draw out students' thoughts on ethics and philosophy. Together they explored the complexity of what George saw as life's fundamental dilemma: how to balance the rights of individuals with the needs of society in a way that made both stronger.





*One of our basic principles is equal rights of all different ethnic and racial groups. We experienced the racist concepts of Nazi Germany, and there was no doubt in our mind that education should never allow this kind of prejudice because it sets people against each other and creates violence.*

#### THE FINE PRINT:

Diversity was central to George's philosophy as an educator and humanitarian. In 1955, Roeper became the first private school in the area to integrate. When the school moved to the Bloomfield Campus, the bus system was instated to ensure that the school maintained a diverse mix of students. George cultivated an environment in which no individual was ever made to doubt his or her self-worth, and he inspired his students to spread the same ideals of respect throughout the world.



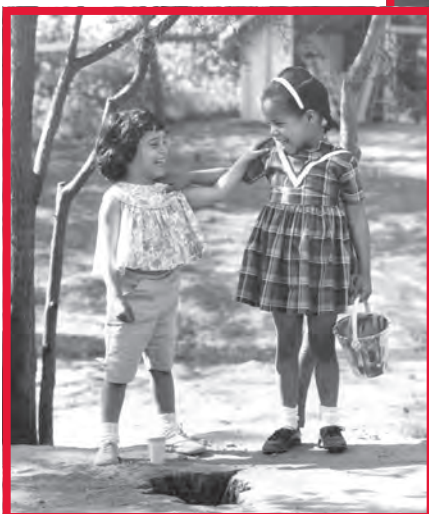
*It has been our task  
not to let reasoning,  
intellectualism and  
over-ambitious learning  
get in the way  
of happiness.*

#### THE FINE PRINT:

For many winters, Roeper parents would roll out the pump house hose and flood the low area behind Hill House to make the ice rink. The whole community enjoyed skating and sledding together.







*You should know  
that you will come to a school  
where your teacher is your friend,  
where you will find boys and girls  
who are your friends,  
and I will be your friend.*



What is Hindstrum? Only a City & Country boy and girl knows.

It is a mysterious, yet very real but hidden, secret place way back in our woods, well concealed by ragged underbrush, tangled twigs and twisted limbs coming down from dead trees. Underneath all this dense, knotted jumble is a tiny, dirty creek — not roaring through the maze of dead wood, not even whispering, just muddying most of the time.

This secluded, sheltered spot has vital and profound meaning to everyone who has gone through City & Country. Why? Because here an exploring mind finds a paradise of animal life with creeping turtles, croaking frogs and swirling, gliding salamanders. Creative ingenuity has a marvelous chance to build a picturesque bridge, an earth-filled dam, only to be swept away again and again; or to set up a branch-walled hut hovering precariously balanced over the scanty creek.

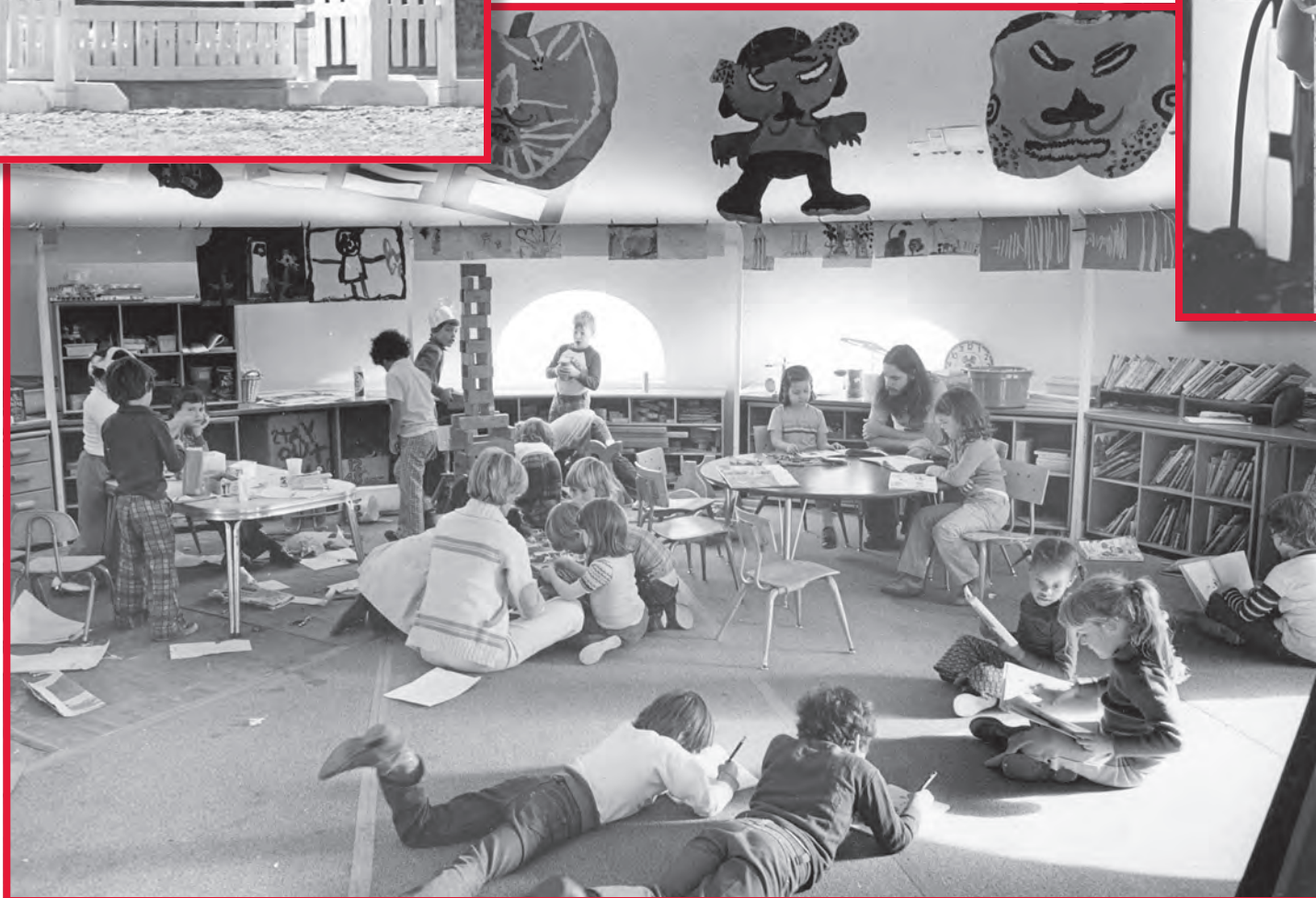
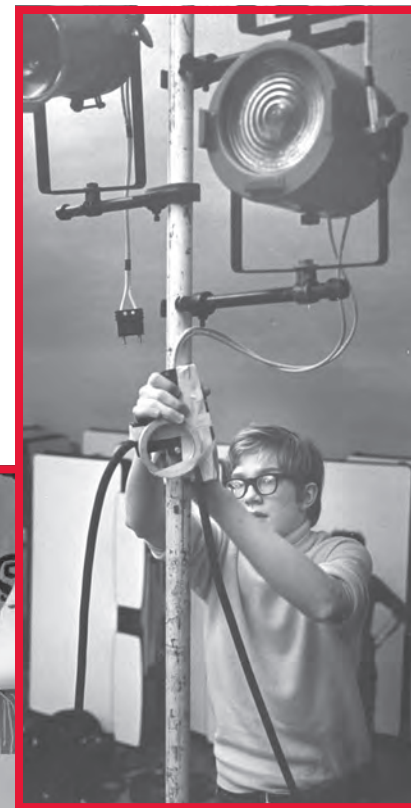


This is Hindstrum, and Hindstrum is everything that youthful, creative imagination desires; everything that dreaming fantasy conjures up.





*Freedom of choice is a great value. Every day the freedom of choice makes life exciting, colorful, a real thrill. It takes the monotony out of life. It stirs and inspires you to find new forms of expression.*



*Maybe these years have given you a sense of community with the school, a sense of having gotten values dear to you, a sense of having had meaningful relationships with friends.*

*If that is so, I cannot see how we can ever forget each other.*



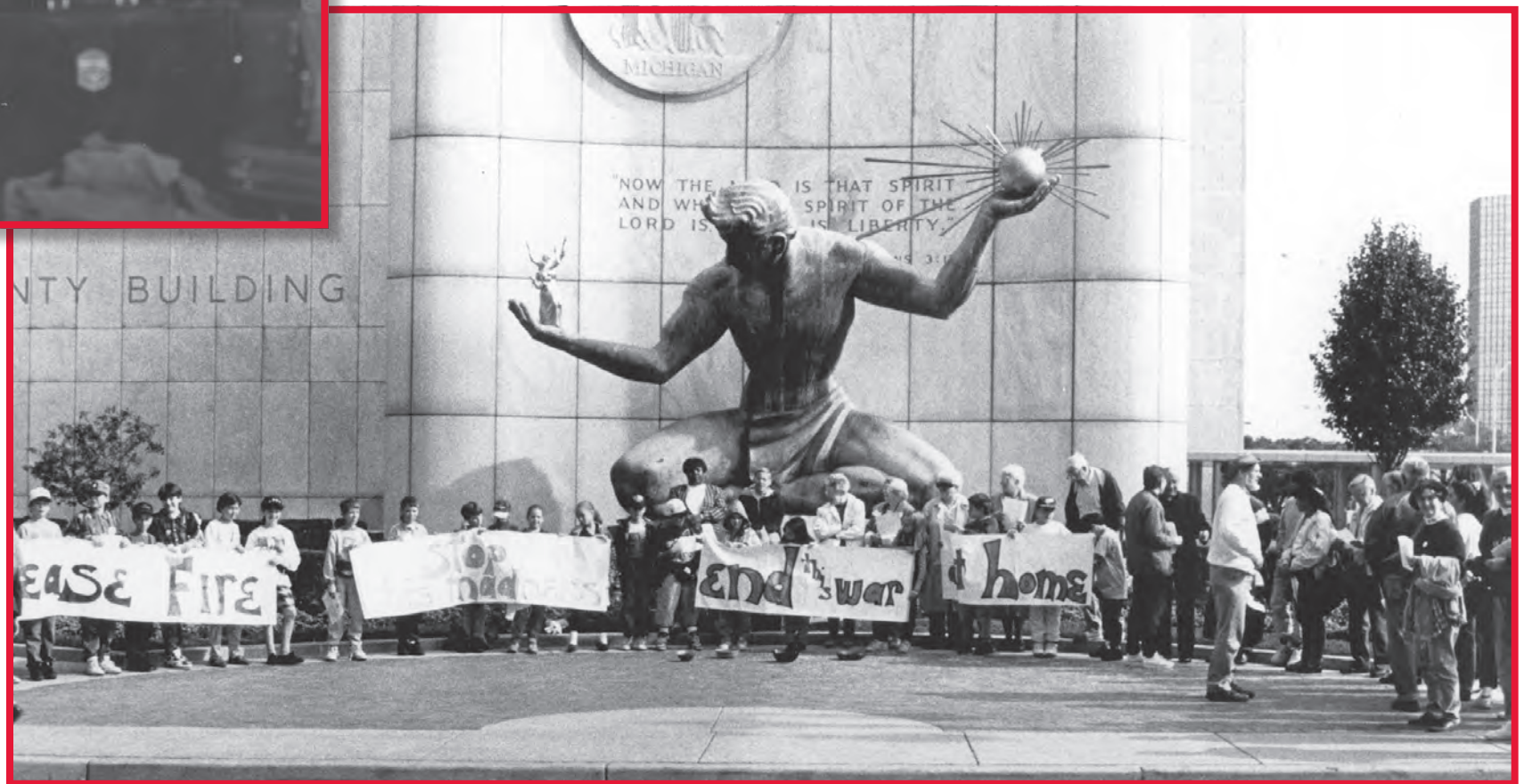
#### THE FINE PRINT:

George began the tradition of giving speeches at Commencement. Throughout his time at the Bloomfield campus, he wrote a speech for every one of his students. Today, graduating seniors choose teachers to give their speeches.





*Humanism is a philosophy which believes in Man's capacity to improve human relations; to have life regulated by justice instead of power, which is divisive, which causes people to hate each other, fight each other, yes – destroy each other. Power tries to force people to be intolerant of other beliefs, to be intolerant of contrary opinions. It is human to ponder, to question everything as to its truth and validity and to judge matters with honesty and an open mind. It is the beauty of democracy which makes use of that which is human: to raise issues, to discuss, to argue, to debate. I hope you leave this school with a mission. Beware of the enemies of humanism. Try to defend this school and its philosophy as a fortress of humanism. Do not only defend it, but fight for it.*



THE FINE PRINT: George encouraged his students to act on their beliefs, and Roeper students did so regularly.

*You began to understand that growing up takes time,  
that we cannot be grown up all at once  
but that we get there.*





## A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF GEORGE A. ROEPER

George Roeper was a remarkable man: courageous, thoughtful, resourceful and deeply ethical. Despite having witnessed one of the world's greatest inhumanities — the Nazi regime — George still believed in the goodness inherent in human nature. His experience in Germany only gave greater impetus to his desire to give children the opportunity to achieve their highest potential by growing up in an environment in which they were respected, trusted and learned the critical values of tolerance, open-mindedness and a commitment to justice rather than power.



George was born in Hamburg on September 7, 1910, but spent the first seven years of his life in Japan where his father, also named George, was a steel broker for the Trans-Siberian Railway project. He had one sibling, an older brother named Hans. His father could be harsh, but his mother, Anna, was warm and loving.

When he was 13, George began attending Max and Gertrud Bondy's boarding school. Gertrud was a psychoanalyst and Max had been active in the German Youth Movement, which, like the 1960s American youth movement, advocated a free society. Together they had a vision of creating a kinder, more moral world by educating children to know themselves and to learn how to collaborate in open, supportive communities.

At the school George also met his life's partner in love and work — Max and Gertrud's oldest daughter, Annemarie. Although she was eight years younger than George, they had an immediate affinity that grew over the years into love until neither could imagine a life without the other.

In 1930, George graduated from Marienau and entered university to study economics, although he always assumed he and Annemarie would open a school of their own one day. Then in 1933 the Nazis ascended to power. The Bondys were Jewish by heritage, although they had been baptized as Lutherans in 1924. Max, a decorated German Army veteran, felt safe but George, who was not Jewish, recognized the danger. He obtained non-Jewish passports for the family and, with a great deal of effort, persuaded Max to get out while he still could. When Annemarie was studying medicine at the University of Vienna in 1938, George again read the political winds wisely and warned her to leave. Annemarie got on the last train to cross the Austrian frontier before the Germans invaded on March 12.

Later in 1938 an old Marienau friend slipped him the word that he was on a list of people to be summarily executed for his activities. He put on mountain-climbing clothes, wired a few blackened bars of gold under his car and drove to a small border crossing, where he persuaded the guard he was only off for a day of climbing. He sped through the crossing and joined the Bondys in Switzerland.

As the European situation deteriorated, the family decided to emigrate to the United States. Once again, George led the way, sailing to America in late 1938 to look for property where the family could establish a new school. Despite not being able to speak English, he succeeded in finding sites for a summer camp and a school by the time the Bondys arrived in April 1939. On April 20, George, 28, and Annemarie, 20, got married at City Hall in New York City.

In 1941, the young couple came to Detroit to direct a psychoanalytically based nursery school. Annemarie ran the nursery and George began teaching grade school children. They outgrew the first building, then a second. In 1946, only five years after arriving in Detroit, the couple had enough support to be able to move the school to a beautiful estate in Bloomfield Hills reminiscent of Marienau.

George was a tall man with a quiet authority who exuded calmness but was in constant action. The school only ran through sixth grade when they moved to Bloomfield Hills, but George pushed to double the number of classrooms and extend the number of grades. He always had plans underway for new construction, more staff and innovative programs, including his bold plan in 1956 when he turned the school into only the second elementary school in the country devoted exclusively to gifted children.

George made it a point to get to know every student, and taught an ethics class starting with the youngest grades. He travelled worldwide to study educational practices, and also spoke throughout the Metro area about civil rights and educational reform. For many of these years, he was also handling the school's finances — calculating budgets on the backs of envelopes and raising money.

All this was on top of a full personal life. He and Annemarie had three children: Tom was born in 1944, Peter in 1946, and Karen in 1949. They traveled back to Massachusetts every Christmas to celebrate with the Bondy family at Windsor Mountain School, and went to Europe many summers. For George and Annemarie, life was a seamless whole of school, community, family, travel, thinking and doing.

George retired in 1979 when he was 68 years old. By then, the school had grown to 507 students, all on one campus, and had graduated its first senior class in 1969. Annemarie ran the school for one year and retired in 1980. They moved to California in 1983 where they continued to be active in politics — particularly with Amnesty International and nuclear disarmament — as well as with gifted education.

In October 1991 a catastrophic wildfire burst into flame right behind their house in the Oakland Hills. George was having difficulty walking by then, but with only minutes to act Annemarie helped him to the car and they escaped. George died of pneumonia on August 24, 1992, at the age of 81. Almost 800 people attended a memorial service in September that was held at Roeper.

