



Entrance hall, Kenan House

chose to sit on that couch to receive her guests. And we did not know until the next day when we cleaned up that all during the reception, the knob of Dr. Wagoner's rawhide bone was poking up right beside the chief justice of North Carolina.

"Madeline was very embarrassed, but I thought it was hilarious. I'm sure the chief justice knew about it and wondered what in the world that horrible lump was in the Wagoner's couch, but she was too much of a lady to mention it. I've never told her about that bone."

A particularly interesting episode in Wagoner's career and in the university's history occurred during the Vietnam war, just after President Richard Nixon announced his decision to send troops into Cambodia in April, 1970.

"There was an eruption across the nation -- literally -- with buildings burned and violence done," Wagoner said. (The



Dr. Wagoner and his middle son, Robin, frolic with the family pet Doc, self-appointed maitre d' of Kenan House, ca. 1970.



photo courtesy UNCW Randall Library, Lana Taylor, archivist

Student rally protesting U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War.

Kent State shootings occurred at a rally protesting the U.S. incursion into Cambodia.) "I remember coming on campus that morning, and everything was extremely tense."

The Student Government Association President Hugh Carroll Newkirk came to see Wagoner that morning, explaining that the students needed some way to express themselves. A major concern was what form that expression would take. It was agreed that there would be an open meeting of the university family, students, faculty and staff, that afternoon in Hinton James. The SGA president presided at what was a very serious meeting.

During this period, at UNCW and other colleges, a lot of strange, unknown faces were often seen on campus. Some of these non-students showed up at the meeting. The president opened the meeting by asking those present to pass a resolution stating who would have the right to speak. A resolution was offered that only the immediate members of the university community -- faculty, students, and staff -- would have the option of speaking. Others were welcome to stay, but they would not be recognized to speak.

"I've always thought that was a pretty neat thing for him to do because that diffused a lot of what might have taken

war as well those who were violently opposed. After everybody finally wound down, the SGA president and I conferred, and he appointed a committee of three to write a resolution of concern. His choice was absolutely Solomon-like.

"The group included one of the most violent anti-Vietnam war student activists on campus, another was one of the most conservative, loyal, Nixon advocates, and the third was somebody who had not said a word."

The group reconvened after meeting for an hour, having drafted a resolution of

place," Wagoner said.

"The debate went on long and heavy. We heard from those who supported the concern to be hand-delivered to the congressional delegation in Washington. The resolution was adopted without dissent, and the students were ready to head to Washington.

"I called Senator Sam Ervin and asked him if he would help me. He said, 'Certainly I will,' and he called Senator B. Everett Jordan and Alton Lennon, our congressman, and made arrangements for them to receive these students from UNC Wilmington."

As it turned out, Sam Ervin spent two-and-a-half hours with this small delegation from Wilmington. He listened to them express their concerns and told them what he knew about the situation and what his feelings were. Word got around campus that they had been well received by Ervin and the others, and the tension relaxed on this campus, even while other schools were closed for weeks.

"President Friday was one of the college presidents called on by President Nixon for advice during that tumultuous time," Wagoner said. Friday made Nixon aware of how students at UNCW had handled this very explosive issue.

"To me, that situation reflects what a

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