

In-depth Focus on Homecoming

Retrospect: '59-'82

By Alice George
In-depth Editor

From floats to floating bars, Homecoming Queen Competitions to Human Sculpture contests, formal Ballroom Dances to Semi-formal Punk ones - Thus have our Homecomings appeared in the past 20-25 years. The festivities, procedures, and even spirit of Guilford's campus has vastly changed since Joyce Clark, Gwen Reddeck, Elwood Parker, and Bruce Stewart first arrived here.

With an exuberant air of alacrity, Joyce Clark explained that she vividly remembered the dorm decorations of years past. Until approximately 1969, students competed to create the most elaborate design on their residence hall. This competition was so fierce that girls frequently began days in advance and even pulled "all nighters" to create the best decoration. "One year Mary Hobbs built a Real Fort around their dorm!" recollected Ms. Clark. Themes for these creations were usually derived from the opposing football team's name.

Dorm members also congregated to create floats for the halftime parade which began on Friendly Road and toured the campus, culminating on the football field. The Cheerleaders and Homecoming court competing for the title of Homecoming Queen also participated in this parade riding in convertibles. Election results for the Queen were announced at halftime along with the results from the dorm and float competition and prizes varying from cash to trophies were given.

Ms. Clark feels that these activities established a common ground between alumni and students and thereby made the Alumni sense an attachment to Guilford, their old dorms, and present students. Alumni shared in the excitement when their old dorm won; old ties were also strengthened as all traveled through the dorms as part of the Open House tradition.

That evening a Formal Homecoming Dance was held in the old gym. This too entailed much lengthy preparation this time by the Women's Athletic Association, and funded by the Student Government. Ms. Clark, with gnashed teeth, reflected on all the work they did to create elaborate decorations by sewing together enough blue tobacco cloth to cover the ceiling for a "sky" for each year's theme.

Gwen Reddeck, also a member of the W.A.A., recalled the elaborate gowns and extensive receiving line all students had to encounter before entering the dance; this line was comprised of the President and his wife, The Pres. of the Alumni, the Board of Trustees, and the Deans of Men and Women. (Quite a sobriety test.)

This formality was even perpetuated at the football game where Ms. Reddeck added, "Heels were in order!" Another distinct contrast from the casual attire of this year's crowd.

Elwood Parker, both a student (from 60-64) and a member of the faculty from 1968 to present had one vivid memory from his freshman year. Then he explained, there were only 2 days in the school year when girls were allowed in guy's dorms - Homecoming Sat. and May Day (the equivalent to Serendipity). He lived on the 2nd floor of Hege-Cox which was then a guy's dorm, and "tradition" held that freshmen must clean, scrub and prepare the dorm before the girls' visit. Mr. Parker was 1 of 2 freshmen on his hall and consequently spent all night scrubbing floors, walls, and bathrooms!

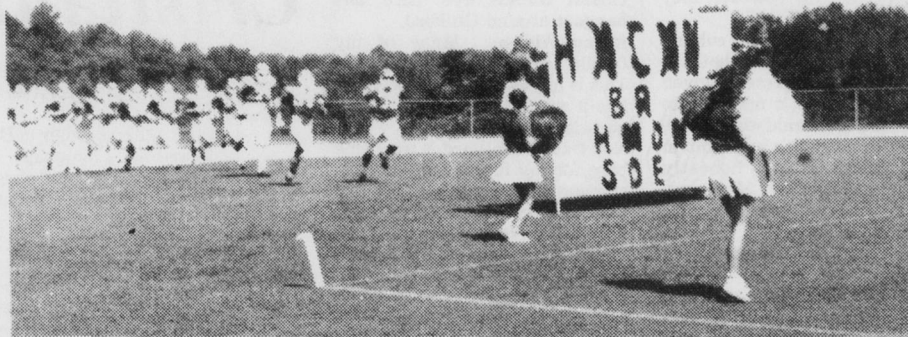
Dr. Parker conceded that males didn't take the Dorm and Float competition "very seriously" and believed only women constructed floats. However the men still took pride in their dorm decoration.

Since alcohol was prohibited on campus, dorm members frequently rented cabins or houses off campus for mind and mood altering festivities. One year Dr. Parker's dorm rented a cabin and invited all alumni from Archdale to join them for a Homecoming celebration. (Dorm capacity then seldom reached over 40 students/residents.)

continued from page 6

The Homecoming Seminars held in Sternberger on September 25 were not well attended, perhaps due to the poor location, but they were enjoyed by those who did participate. Thanks from the Alumni Board to all the faculty, staff and students who attended!

Photo by Tim Harrison



Psychedelic Faces Begin Weekend

Their faces were a shaking blob of red and green substances, and all hands were firmly tied behind backs. What new animal is this? Close observation showed them to be Guilford College people with a head-start on the Homecoming festivities.

The traditional Pie-Eating Contest was re-vamped this year, as the Student Union put a new wiggle in the game - Jello. At nine o'clock the contestants appeared, and the crowd that had been hanging onto the railings at Bryan Quad went wild. When the sportsmen were tied and the judges were ready - the stopwatch was activated.

What came next is for the brave. Faces firmly planted in Jello, trays wiggle and come to life and slimy gelatin oozes onto laps thankfully covered with newspaper. Screams from the crowd, pants from the contestants as they inhale Jello and suddenly... We've got a winner! David Wertz and Terry Johnson have distinguished themselves as the winners of the First Jello-Eating Contest.

The sportsmen (and ladies) depart to take showers, the clean-up committee cries and the crowd disappears. Homecoming 1982 has begun.

WHAT DOES HOMECOMING MAKE YOU THINK OF?

Brenda Esch: A dance, a football game, and lots of old buddies.

Becky Spencer: Parties, the Game, dances, vacation from work, a chance to spend time with good friends and have fun.

Mark R. Wagner: Football, dance, drinking.

Denise Davis: Football, picnics and parades.

Jennifer Williamson: Parties all over campus, but some fun too.

William Meade: A diversity of things ranging from festive, exhilarating occasions to the more subtle and empty football games.

Cindy Sears: Lots of alumni flocking to campus to marvel at "how things have changed."



Photo by Scott Bradford