

Memories of Dick Dyer

◆ Campus comes to grips with loss of important administrator

BY BETSY BLAKE
Staff Writer

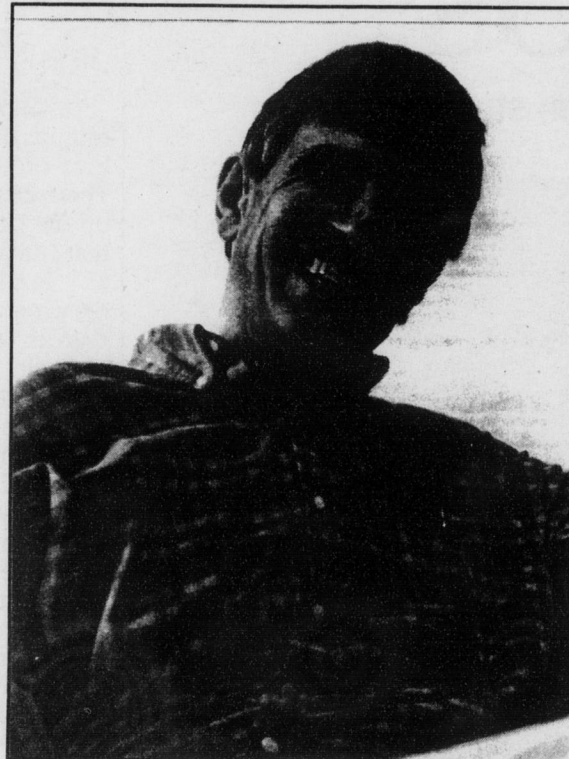
Grief continues to permeate many Guilford College circles as the passing of Dick Dyer, our assistant dean of student life, begins to settle in. A tear-filled memorial service was held last Friday morning in Dana auditorium. GCRO later held a brown-bag lunch in which stories about Dyer were shared. Similar official and unofficial gatherings have taken place around the community.

Whether he was a close friend or only known as that slender, dark-haired man who liked to give speeches, it is important that we take something away from Dick's life and painstaking work here on campus.

James Norton, a junior, remembers a time last year he almost gave up on the college. He

pulled Dick aside at the end of the afternoon. "In thirty minutes," Norton said, "Dick changed my life." Norton recalls Dyer telling him to convert his negative energy into positive energy. He encouraged Norton to combat his disillusionment by being proactive, not simply giving up.

It was at last fall's convocation that CCE student Katherine Wood first heard Dyer speak. "He said the usual things you say at convocations," Wood said. "How it's going to be a good year, to believe in yourself...but this was



the first time I really listened to a speech like that. He seemed real, like he genuinely meant what he was saying. That impressed me."

Sophomore David Curry marvels at the pleasure he had in getting to know Dyer this summer. "He was a wonderful friend and individual," Curry said. "He was truly concerned with the welfare of all students."

Many others have memories of a man often described as humorous, genuine, and admired. We all know the mourning process can last weeks, months, or even years. It is important for us to lift up Dick's friends, family, and other members of the College as they move through this valley in their lives.

The Guilfordian will have more coverage of the Dyer tragedy in our September 13 issue. Those with memories or stories they wish to contribute should contact Adam Lucas.

Guilford Professors Visit Beijing

BY LAURAH NORTON
Staff Writer

Guilford professors say that their preconceived notions of Communist China were quite challenged on their recent trip to Beijing. "Things really aren't so different than they are here," said Bob Williams, a professor of economics and director of the Honors Program. "My conceptions of communism were challenged daily."

Williams and five other Guilford faculty members—Dottie Borei, Kay Doost, Ron Byrnes, Ken Cameron and Laura O' Toole—traveled to China over the summer. They were accompanied by Ashley Morrison, who teaches at Grimsley High School.

The group made the trip, funded by the Freeman foundation, to learn more about Beijing University, where many of our year-abroad students study and live. They also examined the overseas internship possibilities available to education majors.

The professors visited several schools in the Beijing area, and

spoke to primary and middle school teachers. The also had the opportunity to live on campus at Beijing University, which gave them a glimpse of the lives of both our studies-abroad students and the urban residents of Beijing.

When asked about education differences between China and the United States, all the professors interviewed had similar thoughts. "It's much more lecture-based," said Williams. A college education is taken very seriously in China, and the standards for acceptance are much higher than here in America.

"The schools are becoming more and more selective," said Laura O' Toole, a professor of sociology and anthropology. "Students get into college based on examinations."

As well as gaining insight into the Chinese educational system. During the trip, the professors also had a chance to learn more about all of the social and political changes that are reshaping China. The Communist party is now loosening some of its control over the business lives of the Chinese, and allowing entrepreneurs to work on

a for-profit basis. Williams observed that "It is becoming a very capitalist society, where the old socialist values are being eliminated."

Many of the people the professors encountered in Beijing were excited about the rapidly changing city, but others were concerned over the influx of Western influence. The differences between the old and the new were becoming more and more apparent.

Also, an amazing amount of construction was taking place in Beijing during the trip: Williams remembered a car drive in which he counted a hundred cranes within five minutes . . . and then lost count. It has been estimated that between one third and one half of the world's construction equipment is now being used in China.

The people of Beijing spoke fairly freely with the visitors from Guilford, and seemed generally comfortable sharing their political opinions, which covered a wide spectrum.

Some of the strongest emotions and opinions the Chinese people have are centered around

Hong Kong. "There was an incredible excitement about the political changeover in Hong Kong. People were counting down the days, minutes and hours," observed Ron Byrnes, a professor of secondary education.

Williams was also surprised at the lack of military presence in Beijing. Just before the trip, he'd started reading *Wild Swans*, a book that is banned in China. Fearing customs problems, Williams left the text at home. When the group finally reached the Beijing Airport, Williams was shocked at the lack of military security. "I'm sure I could have taken it with me," he now says.

Despite some concerns over the wave of western influence, interactions between foreigners and citizens seemed to be quite positive. Williams observed that "The Chinese people were wonderful. I felt well-treated. As Westerners, we were at times a curiosity, but I felt that everyone was very generous with us. People seemed to be fairly open to answering all the questions we asked."