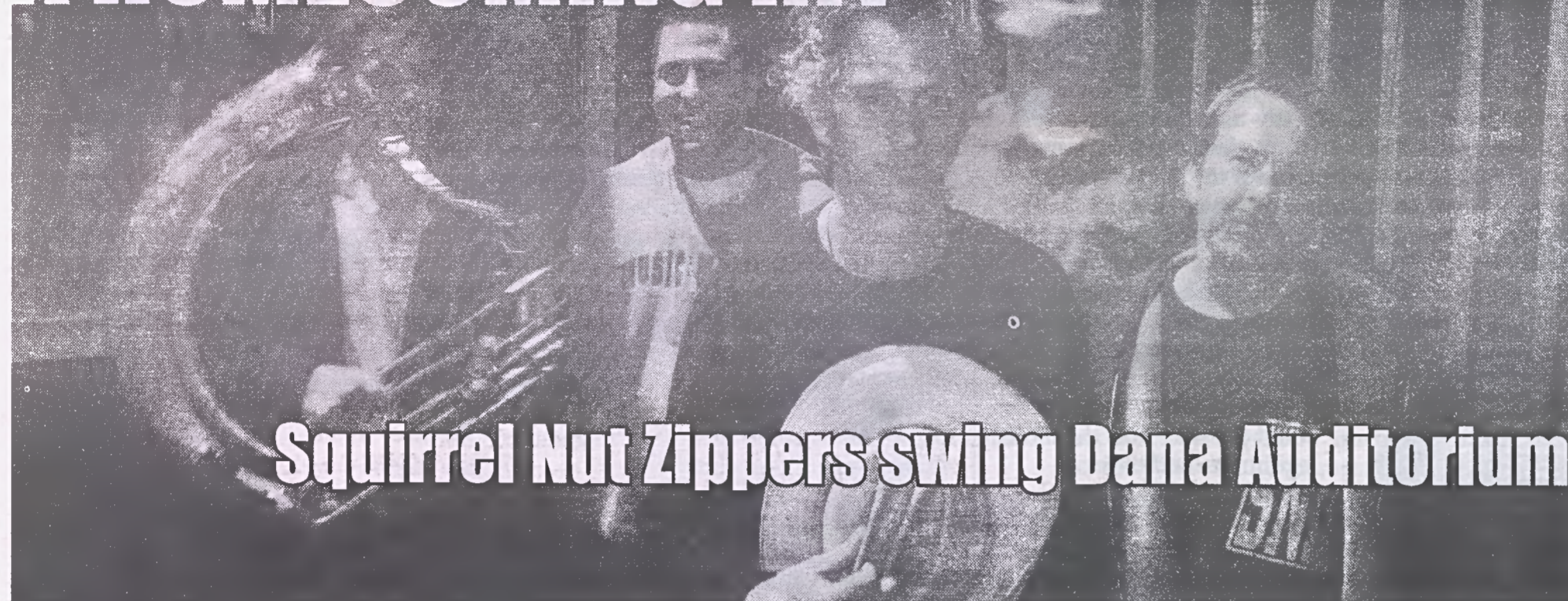


A HOMECOMING HIT



Squirrel Nut Zippers swing Dana Auditorium

DAN KATZMAN/GUILFORDIAN

By Tim May
STAFF WRITER

On Oct. 27, the crowd in Dana Auditorium received a kick in the face from the swing-jazz revival band the Squirrel Nut Zippers.

"I can't wait to see this band!" said Kathy Andrews, a 24-year old UNCG graduate. "I saw them in 2000 and they were phenomenal. I'll be surprised if they disappoint."

Andrews' predictions were accurate. At 9:13 p.m. the eight members of the Squirrel Nut Zippers shuffled onto the stage of Dana Auditorium and were met by a roar of clapping and cheering from the audience.

Katharine Whalen, the group's only female, dressed in a lavish, multi-colored, 1920s-style gown that she frequently swung with her hands to tease the audience. Next to her stood the guitarist, "Jimbo" Mathus, who sported a cowboy hat and a long yellow cord connecting his guitar to his amplifier. The rest of the band wore fancy suits, ready to perform their swing-jazz classics.

The band started off with fast-paced songs like "Good Enough for Granddad," which con-

sisted of elaborate drum fills, intricate violin and horns, and twangy vocals from the singer, Jimbo. The audience began to nod their heads and tap their chests but remained glued to their chairs.

While the Squirrel Nut Zippers play a style of old swing music, the age group in the audience was stunning. Besides a handful of Guilford and UNCG students, the crowd seemed to all be over 40. This contributed to the stiff audience throughout the show.

"I thought the band was really professional and put on a really good show," said senior Joe Gillette. "But the show was hampered by the lack of enthusiasm in the audience."

With the exception of a couple in their mid-20's dancing in the balcony, the crowd remained seated throughout the entire show. Even a "How's everybody doin' tonight?" gesture from Jimbo was responded to with a whimper.

However, the band consistently wowed the audience with their secret weapon: the horn section. During songs like "Prince Nez," instruments such as the banjo and clarinet were shoved into the background due to near-deaf-

ening trumpets and saxophones that sounded like sirens.

The pinnacle of the Squirrel Nut Zippers' set was their surprising transition from an ambient song to "Hell," their notorious and fan-favorite anthem. The crowd erupted immediately as the stage lights turned blood red and the slick keyboards kicked in.

Featuring bells, violin, horns, and thunderous drums, "Hell" revived the audience's energy, even though they were still seated. For the first time, the crowd stomped their feet and yelled back the lyrics to the band excitedly.

The crowd followed up with this enthusiasm as Dana Auditorium shook with pleas of "ZIPPERS!" for the band to come back onstage for an encore. When the band reappeared, they performed an acoustic number entitled "You, You, You." The audience swayed back and forth in their seats, showing their satisfaction with finger snaps.

The Squirrel Nut Zippers may not have roused the crowd with dancing and singing as much as they had hoped, but they supplied enough energy to make sure that even a seated audience was still rocking out.

Laughter highlights Homecoming weekend

By Landry Haarmann
STAFF WRITER

On Saturday night Guilford students, alumni, and community members gathered in Dana Auditorium for the same reason: to laugh.

The laughter's source was the famous Chicago-based Second City comedy troupe. The troupe has a notable list of alumni, including Chris Farley, Mike Myers, Steve Carrell and presidential hopeful (in South Carolina, anyway) Stephen Colbert.

Present troupe members include Tim Baltz, Rebecca Hanson, Brendan Jennings, Dana Quercioli, Mary Sohn and Mark Raterman. The six comedians, dressed in black suits, skirts and dress pants broke out on stage and began performing immediately, seamlessly moving into wry 60 second skits that ended with strong, witty and slightly twisted one-liners.

"I'm worried 'cause you're a paranoid schizophrenic," said one comedian to the other woman on stage, who expressed concern that

everyone was after her in the opening skit. After the "schizophrenic" and the woman left the stage, the "concerned friend" talked into a microphone attached to her shirt. "OK, she's left the building," they said.

Sophomore Kate Harrington found the troupe's brand of comedy to her taste. "It was absurdist humor," Harrington said. "That made the acts awkward, but very funny."

One of the more awkward and absurd routines was a wordless skit about a couple dancing together while taking a shower and going through their normal bathing routine. The bathing, hair washing, and loofah-ing was disrupted when the significant others attempted to make otherwise mundane tasks, such as shaving the armpit, into something sexy only to fail when they found these actions disconcerting rather than seductive. The actors' body language and the actions had the audience in stitches.

The troupe's improve was also met with audience enthusiasm. Ellen Koehler, a triad resident, liked

the improvisational skits best. "I'm always really impressed when people can do improv well, it just seems like such a difficult skill," she said.

The troupe's skills really shone during their improv. They fluidly moved through scenes without stumbling lines, going blank or laughing at their own jokes, and even acted through small technical difficulties.

One of the more impressive aspects of their improvisation was how well they could weave together a crazy, yet somehow coherent plot line as they went along. One of improvised skits started with a ventriloquist's dummy, went to a couple breaking up in the middle, and then brought it back to the dummy at the very end.

What was the central theme tying all this together? An oak tree that created the dummy was the same tree that the dendrophiliac boyfriend preferred over the girlfriend he broke up with.

The improvisation opened up the show beyond the boundaries of a normal skit by bringing audience

members into it. Audience members gave the troupe suggestions about the scene's setting or action. Audience suggestions even added to the show. How many people think to base a skit around the idea contributed by one audience member: a potato gun?

Like all good comedians, the troupe did have something to say through their comedy. Some of the sketches were politically charged, either satirizing politics or directly dismissing aspects of the present political sphere.

The group sang against anti-gay marriage laws. The song dismantled arguments against gay marriage, arguing that it's ridiculous that in Kentucky it's legal for a heterosexual to marry their 16 year old, mentally handicapped third cousin, but same-sex partners can not.

Sophomore Ashley Mailliard felt that the troupe's comedy was a good medium for getting across a serious point, saying, "comedy makes it easier to understand a message; it allows you to let your political frustrations out."

A trip to the trough

J & S Cafeteria
601 Milner Drive
\$\$ out of \$\$\$\$

By Ian Michie
STAFF WRITER



You can take the boy out of Forsyth County, but you can't take Forsyth County out of the boy. Folks, sometimes I like to belly-up to the country feed-trough, so when I happened upon J & S Cafeteria I realized it had been a while since I had tempted fate, or congestive heart failure, and treated myself to the delights of Southern-country cooking.

Be forewarned, Southerners eat some pretty strange things, and I'm no exception. Since the time we could hunt critters down with a musket we've been bread-ing and frying anything that moves. We wax philosophical about the benefits of a good batch of collard-greens, and the winner of the church-league bake-off enjoys a celebrity-status of Britney Spearian proportions.

J & S does all of the standard Southern fare: fried-chicken, baked ham, chicken livers, braised cabbage, macaroni-and-cheese casserole (made with eggs, not just cheese sauce), and of course, pinto beans. For those with less fondness for food flavored with pork fat, there are items such as veal-parmesan and an intriguing thing called Chicken San Francisco.

A salad bar offers no new surprises, but all of the items are fresh and plentiful. A vegetarian can find many items to choose from here, just avert your eyes while walking through the entrée section; all that cooked-dead-animal can bring on cartiogenic shock if seen in one place.

I felt adventurous so I chose the Piedmont Triad's answer to foie gras - chicken livers and gravy. This is definitely an acquired taste, and I'll spare the reader of any lengthy description of why they were good, just know that by Southern standards they rated pretty high.

The pintos were fine as well, but the even flavoring and consistency made me suspicious that they might be from a can. The macaroni and cheese was disappointing for lack of flavor, but the finale, a huge wedge of chocolate pie, was as inviting as a day at Lowes Motor Speedway. For all its simplicity (chocolate pudding and cool whip in a pre-made pie shell), this type of pie is still one of my childhood-favorites.

To get the full package you must select sweet-tea to drink. Finally someone's gotten the sugar-content right in their tea. There was just enough sweetness, and the bouquet and body was reminiscent of oak and tobacco, with just a hint of hickory. The finish was exquisite. Yep, we take tea that seriously.

As for the atmosphere, it may seem a bit like a grandparent's convention. Just remember, with age comes wisdom.

For \$10 I didn't have to worry about eating for the rest of the day, although that doesn't mean I didn't. J & S satisfied my home-cooking craving, and now it's from the trough to the treadmill to see if I can counter-act the damage.