

CROSSROADS

Belmont Abbey College



crossroads

VOLUME 1 - ISSUE 2

JANUARY, 1972

Bold Cuts Insure Bright Future

As you may have already heard, Belmont Abbey College has made some major revisions in the academic and varsity sports program. It is felt that the best presentation of these changes appears as it was originally announced by Father John Bradley, the president. What follows is: one, the memo read to the faculty and then to the student body; two, the official press release from the College; three, a reaction of the press to the announcement.

Presidential Memo

Facing up to the financial problems afflicting Belmont Abbey College has been by far the most worrying and challenging part of my job since I came here. Throughout the whole of last year, I brought this problem to the urgent attention of the Trustees, Administration, and Faculty. Last year, however, rather than recommend serious action to cope with this problem, I decided to study the situation further, even though I knew that many comparable colleges had already taken such serious action.

At the beginning of this year I asked the Treasurer of the College to give me an accounting of the deficit situation. A summary of his detailed report shows that despite freezing wages and a slight increase in student enrollment, the College has at present an accumulated deficit of approximately \$200,000. The projection over the next three years shows that we would have an additional deficit of \$400,000. This would be the case even if we continue to freeze wages during that period, a policy I am not willing to adopt. The overall projection, therefore, shows that by June 1, 1975, the College would have an accumulated deficit of approximately \$600,000. That, of course, would necessitate the closing of the College. We are determined that this shall not happen. Consequently, bold measures must be resorted to

now to insure the survival of the College.

I presented this alarming situation to the Board of Trustees in September and received from the Trustees a letter dated September 28 instructing the Administration to study carefully the present operation of the College and to take all possible steps to eliminate our deficit situation. Responding to this letter, the Administration, working with the Budget Committee, drew up its recommendations.

Included in these recommendations are the following broad measures: a) the phasing out of the Pre-Engineering (3--2 and 2--2) Programs; b) the dropping of a major in Philosophy; c) the dropping of baseball, golf, tennis, and track as intercollegiate sports; d) a substantial reduction in the library book budget.

The Administration's recommendations, while requesting the cutting of certain programs, also requested the strengthening of other programs, particularly those that are experiencing a growing student demand. In formulating the recommendations, the Administration has made every effort to preserve a healthy educational program despite the grave need to effect the economies that are essential at this time.

The Administration's recommendations were presented to the Board of Trustees on Monday, November 1, and after detailed explanation and discussion, were adopted unanimously.

My role in these serious measures is one that I dearly wish I could have avoided. But it is my sincere conviction that no other alternative is open to me at this time. It is also my sincere conviction that by taking this action we can make it possible

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Father Bertrand is seen looking out of the observatory dome on the old science building when it was first installed many years before the move to the William Gaston Science Hall.

Gaston Hall Has New Look

Until the summer of 1971, thousands of motorists driving East and West along I-85 would have found it hard to identify William Gaston Science Hall as a new science building. Architecturally it was competing with Pharr's new textile complex slightly west of it. Now, from either approach to the highway, a reflecting dome crowns the building, an obvious science complex with an observatory.

For many years, Father Bertrand, who originated the Abbey's first observatory out of a fallout shelter, dreamed of the establishment of a more permanent structure. Through the generosity of his friends in Maine, the dream is now a reality. The new site, which enabled the observatory to be bodily moved from the old science building in May, will allow it to accommodate five telescopes. The main telescope, under the dome, will be a 12" Cassegrainian. The mirrors were made and donated



The big lift begins.

by Mr. B. T. Dickson of Gastonia. Because of these and other generous gifts, completion of the astronomy facilities is looked for later this Fall.

Father Bertrand has already begun use of the observatory for

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