

# Roots, The Story of a College

**Editor's Note:** This is Part 2 of a two article series.

by Danny Clark

During the sixties the construction trend continued with the completion of Patten Hall in 1962, Merritt and the Fine Arts Center in 1963, the Cecil W. Robbins Library in 1965, and Kenan Hall in 1968. The A. C. Building was purchased from the Franklin County School System in 1961. It had previously been used to house grades 1-12 and was called the W. R. Mills School.

The beginning of the Vietnam War in 1965 creates two separate attitudes on campus. The first was led by several faculty members who supported the war and consequently influenced the students towards a pro-war attitude. However, as the national sentiment toward the war declined in the late sixties, Louisburg College students also went through a change in attitude. This change led the school into a anti-war attitude by the close of the sixties.

In 1968 school enrollment rose to an all time high of 823. This increase was due partly by men entering school in order to evade the draft, the World War II baby boom, and the acceptance of the first blacks at the College.

The first half of the 1970's brought about one of the most unsettled periods in Louisburg College's history. However, these years were influential in changing school policies.

The key issue the college faced was whether or not women were being discriminated against. This evolved around the fact that women had to be in at 11:00 o'clock Sunday through Thursday and 1:00 o'clock on Friday and Saturday, while the men were allowed to stay out all night if they wished.

In 1974 the students organized a protest on the front steps of Main in hopes of creating a change in the women's dorm policy. At that time the administration stated that they were looking into the matter but came up with no solutions. The Administration's central argument was that a church affiliated school had to impose stricter rules in order to uphold their church relations.

During this time a letter was sent by the students to HEW complaining about the discrimination at the college. If HEW was to prove the school had sexually discriminated against the women the college would lose badly needed federal funds.

On February 14, 1974, following a nonproductive meeting between the SGA and the former Dean of Students concerning the women's situation, a pipe bomb was placed on the window sill of the former Dean's Office. The bomb exploded blowing out the air conditioner and part of the window frame. The school offered a \$1,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the persons responsible for the bombing. The person or persons responsible for the bomb were never caught. The SGA denied any involvement with the incident, however, the former Dean of Students suspended the SGA for an indefinite period of time in order to keep them from rousing up other students.

Talks later resumed on the subject and when the students returned from Spring break the girls curfew had been changed from 11:00 Sunday through Thursday to 12:00 with Friday and Saturday remaining at 1:00.

The school initiated a rugby and soccer organization in 1974 and in addition set a national record by being the number one streaking school, percentage wise, in the nation. Streakers were seen in open cars, on bikes, and in a dash to the "Old Confederate."

In January of 1975 women reached another goal when the college received its first female president of SGA, by appointment, since the Men's and Women's Government consolidated in 1967. Our current president, Kim Henley, is the first woman president to actually be elected by students.

1976-1978 marked the first increase in student enrollment the school has had in eight years. These years have also seen a new academic attitude develop on the campus. Dean Brown stated that this year's classes have shown a marked improvement in basic scholastic skills. He feels that high schools are placing more emphasis on reading and writing skills. The college received five to six times more applications this year which allowed admissions to select a higher quality student.

Most of the students at LC feel that they can get more individual help with their studies. This search for individuality has brought many students to LC and could be part of the reason why Louisburg has not only survived but grown through the years in the shadows of schools such as NCSU, UNC-CH, Wake Forest, and Duke.

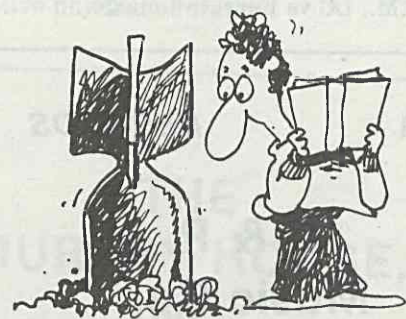
Recent surveys show that 83.5% of LC students have been academically successful in their first year after transferring to schools in the North Carolina college system. LC has maintained high academic standards and has a good reputation with four year institutions, which will help when transferring.

The change to a coeducational college in 1931, the shift from a majority of men in 1945, the struggle to save LC in 1954, the changing attitude throughout the late sixties, the fight for an extension of women's dorm hours in 1974, and the open dorm policy initiated in the spring of 1978 have all affected the students current social situation. The responsibility of continuing to add to and to enhance LC social life now rest in the present students hands. As the students look to tomorrow they should look forward to accepting any academic, historic, or social challenge that LC provides them with and do their utmost to improve upon the historical and social development at Louisburg College.

FRANKLY SPEAKING ...by phil frank



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