



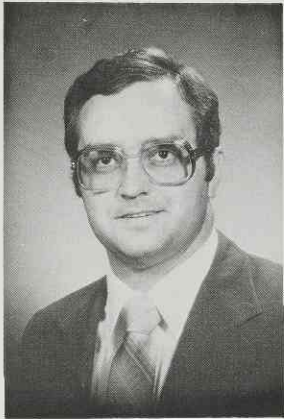
THE PILOT



Gardner-Webb College

APRIL, 1986

BOILING SPRINGS, NORTH CAROLINA



BARRY HARTIS

Financial "Helmsman" Departs

The resignation of Barry Hartis, Vice-President for Business and Finance, on April 2 brought about a wave of shock on the Gardner-Webb campus. An employee of GW for 10 years Hartis says his decision to move on, "was fairly sudden but I have been offered a jewel of an opportunity."

The jewel of which Hartis speaks is the position as Dean of Administrative Services at the College of the Albemarle in Elizabeth City. Hartis states, "I always wanted to live near the beach and that was certainly an influencing factor." Employed as a tax accountant with Ernst and Whinney of Charlotte prior to coming to GW in '76, Hartis attributes his move primarily to professional growing pains. "There comes a time when a career person wonders what is available to him and that is what I am doing, finding out what else I can do."

The College of the Albemarle is a community college with approximately 1,800 students. It has a main campus which is located in Elizabeth City and two satellite centers, one which is located on Roanoke Island. Because it is a public, state-supported institution, Hartis is preparing himself for a "brief transitional phase" upon his arrival there.

Hartis relates that he will miss Gardner-Webb, the students and the faculty but will come back to visit and to note the progress of this institution.

Community Joins With Washburn Family In Search And Anguish

By Roberta Borden

One of the largest gathering places in Boiling Springs served as the headquarters for perhaps the most extensive search in the town's history. Boiling Springs Baptist Church was a hub of activity the weekend of April 4-6, the weekend Sherry Lynn Washburn disappeared from the vicinity of the Gardner-Webb College stadium. As quoted from the *Shelby Star*, Rodney Nolan, manager of the Snack Shop stated, "I've been living here 30 years and I've not seen anything like it. I hope it's the last time. It really opens your eyes a little bit. Boiling Springs is a community that pulls together. I'm proud to be a part of a community like that. It's just about like a small family."

People from throughout the community joined Saturday, April 5 to begin searching for the missing teen. An estimated 350 individuals were involved in the search which included townspeople, college students and faculty, as well as the Red Cross and Civil Air Patrol. Old and young hunted the woods and fields, buildings and roads surrounding the Gardner-Webb College and Boiling Springs areas. Each individual united with his neighbor into a large unit which expressed a singleness of purpose: Sherry had to be found! Although temperatures swung up into the 80's few gave up their mission. They endured the sting of insects, blisters, scratches and cuts compliments of the briar patches through which they searched, and the energy-sapping glare of the sun because they cared.

Sunday the search again resumed from Boiling Springs Baptist. People were a bit more determined to find the girl as they found it difficult to imagine her missing for yet another night. Canoers searched the banks of the Broad River and others extended their

search into S.C. while still others tramped through the woods rechecking spots they might have overlooked the day before. Attics and basements across the GW campus were searched as were remote buildings. Announcements were made in local churches and in the dormitories asking people to come out and help search and they did. The

number of people searching on Sunday peaked around 500. Churches unable to participate in the search effort contributed their prayers.

At the time this article goes to press, Sherry Washburn still lies unconscious in critical condition in Charlotte Memorial Hospital guarded by local police. She also lies in the thoughts of every person in

this community, in their prayers, and in their lives. The one immeasurable good that came from this terrible tragedy is the unity that this community expressed as well as their love and dedication which was expressed throughout the weekend of Sherry's disappearance. We are all truly blessed to be included in such a family.

Professor Exonerated In Trial

By Roberta L. Borden

RUTHERFORDTON — On April 10 the trial of Rupel Williams vs. Gardner-Webb College and Dr. Joyce Brown was held in Federal Court at Rutherford County Courthouse. Williams, a former student at GW, filed suit against Dr. Brown and GW, alleging she had been discriminated against because of her race.

Williams, a student in Brown's English 102 class during the Spring 1984 semester, alleged that Brown had treated her in a discriminatory manner and had made verbal slurs against Williams and her race.

Prior to attending GW, Williams, a native of Jamaica, attended Central Piedmont Community College in Charlotte where she earned her degree in Practical Nursing. Williams transferred to GW to earn a degree in Registered Nursing.

During Williams' testimony she stated that Brown had given her white students preferential treatment, that she had made verbal slurs against her in regard to her race, and that Dr. John Drayer had tried to convince Williams that the entire matter was merely a misunderstanding.

Williams' lawyer, Mike Sheely of Charlotte, introduced several papers the plaintiff had written while attending Cleveland Tech. and CPCC, a paper written while she was a member of Brown's class,

and the "drop sheet" which finalized Williams' withdrawal from Brown's class. Sheely argued that if Williams could write acceptable, passing papers at other schools she ought to have been able to complete English 102 at GW had racism not been involved. The drop sheet was used as another point of argument as Brown had signed the sheet which stated that Williams' reason for withdrawal was that Dr. Brown had called her a racially derogatory name. When her statements appeared to be at variance with her signed deposition, she said, "I never said that," "They must have misunderstood," or "Who said that?" The plaintiff's lawyer called no witnesses.

The defense lawyer, Fred Flowers of Shelby, was quick to clarify that Brown had not noticed the reason Williams had given for her withdrawal on the "drop sheet." Brown said "was in a hurry to get it signed and get the whole ordeal over with..." During the cross-examination Sheely asked Brown if she had called Williams a name and Brown replied, "I have never called anyone that, ever. I don't use that kind of language."

The defense called five witnesses, the first of whom was Dr. John Drayer, Vice-President for Academic Affairs. During Williams' testimony she had stated that Drayer had told her at one time to "suppose that she were here in the '60s' when

(racial slur) were kicked and whipped." Drayer denied this in his testimony and stated, "Williams has suffered a terrible misconception." After his testimony Rita Turner and Cindy Conner were called to the witness stand. Both of these witnesses were in the English 102 class with Williams and testified that Brown had treated Williams the same as any other student and that white students were not given preferential treatment. The final witness for the defense was Isaac Mwase of Zimbabwe, Africa, a former student of Brown's. Mwase stated, "I once went to Dr. Brown to question a grade I received on a paper and she explained why I got a 'B' instead of an 'A' and she certainly never discriminated against me." In fact, he said that he had seen Dr. Brown disturbed by an incident involving the Blood-mobile screening process, conducted by the Red Cross, which questioned his national status.

After 8 hours in court, the jury of three men and three women handed down a verdict of "Not guilty" after only 15 minutes of deliberation. The verdict acquitted Brown and GW of any charges. Neither Williams or her lawyer had any comment. Dr. Joyce Brown said, "I am very grateful to the students who came here and told the truth and to the faculty and especially to Dr. Williams for support throughout the months of this ordeal."