

THE PENDULUM

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Celebrating 30 years of covering the Elon community.

EXTRA! EXTRA! Newspaper marks 30 years of chronicling the Elon legacy

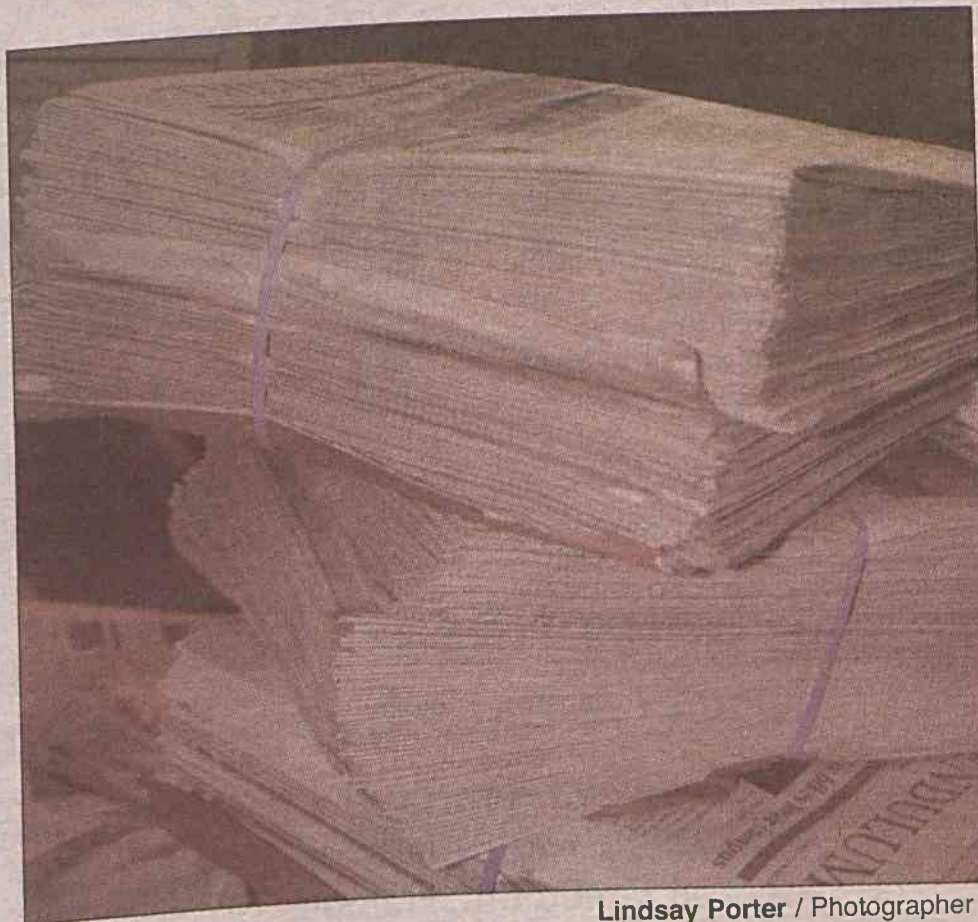
Lindsay Porter
Managing Editor '03

There was a buzz surrounding Elon College in October 1974. Fall was in the air, the Fightin' Christian football season was well under way and students were in the middle of their semester. And nestled in the confines of Long Student Center, a small group of committed students was recording it all—the wins and losses, the speakers, the quirky anecdotes and events that were continuously shaping a campus both consciously and subliminally. Their stories became the buzz of the campus for just one week, but their words would live for eternity. In print. In *The Pendulum*.

Six enterprising editors, 12 reporters and one typist joined pioneering professor Mary Ellen Priestley in publishing the first edition of *The Pendulum* in 1974. Priestley, a professor in the journalism and English departments, and her husband, also a professor, even leased space under the old Pendulum office where they housed the Priestley Art Gallery, according to Provost Gerry Francis, who started at the school in 1974.

"She was just a wonderful and wise woman," Francis said. "She was very stately." Priestley led a campaign encouraging the Elon Board of Trustees to not only establish a students newspaper, but also a communications department, a media board and a Board of Student Communications. At the time, Elon College was home to just 2,175 students, studying 26 majors.

Patsy Lynch, co-editor in chief of *The Pendulum* from 1974-1975, is credited with developing the name of the paper. Lynch's friend had mentioned including a time element in the name, and referenced daytime soap



Lindsay Porter / Photographer

operas. The phrases "As the Pendulum Turns" and "As the Pendulum Swings" were tossed back and forth, and the staff finally agreed they would name their paper *The Pendulum*. "Just like the Pendulum on a clock, the contents and attitudes of *The Pendulum* swing right to left without stopping," Lynch said. "Some years the staff may be conservative, other years it may be liberal."

The Pendulum was not the first attempt a student newspaper on Elon's campus. Three

separate attempts were made to create a student press. *The Maroon and Gold* was published Dec. 1, 1919 to May 22, 1969, but was discontinued due to lack of student interest. Funding for the publication was also eliminated because members of the Academic Council felt the paper "was not serving its purpose."

In the meantime, *The Veritas* had emerged as an underground newspaper in October 1968. *The Veritas* editors called *The Maroon and Gold* a product of Elon's administration

and declared themselves a "liberated press." In 1962, Student Government Association published *The Campus Crier*, and 18 to 22-page periodical of campus happenings.

Francis recalled the *The Pendulum*'s humble beginnings. "The first edition was just four pages," he said. "There was no color and it was all done on a typewriter."

Perseverance and diligence were the keys to making *The Pendulum* successful. Securing funding, keeping up with technology and facing the potential of censorship were always threats to the livelihood of the new organization. When Priestley, who served as adviser to *The Pendulum* for many years, first started working with the newspaper, she requested \$500 to purchase a compugraphic-typesetter. Her request was denied; school officials considered the purchase unnecessary. In *The Pendulum* office today, now housed in Moseley Center 233, staff members use \$1,500 Macintosh computers to write, design and layout the stories the campus enjoys each week.

"*The Pendulum* has grown in conjunction with the institution's growth," Francis said. "We have a great community, and *The Pendulum* is a part of the community. It contains points of view and stories that people read and value."

Many years, editions and staff members later, *The Pendulum* continues to cover the stories that matter to Elon. Fall convocation speaker Anna Quindlen said, "Words on a page are my best self." The words on each page of *The Pendulum* represent Elon's best self—they tell the stories that shape a collective memory, a living record.

Here's to the next 30 years.