

Alumnae Update

by Mary Dameron Holderness
President, Salem College
Alumnae Association

Salem students, you are now reading the unsolicited comments of a former student (Class of 1966, to be exact) who wants all of you to know that something is happening among Salem alumnae that can affect you and those who attend Salem after you. Some of us have been spending more time on campus, doing things like listening to your student leaders and finding out what life at Salem is like for you--your celebrations and your frustrations. We have been talking with Dr. Litzenburg and the deans and the faculty and the staff, trying to understand how the "new" and the "traditional" are being meshed to make Salem even stronger.

Why this sudden burst of interest? Well, your Alumnae Association Board recognizes the fact the SALEM STANDS VERY TALL among women's liberal arts institutions. We give substantial credit to Salem for the accomplishments and successes in our own individual lives. We recognize the determination and commitment of the President, faculty, trustees and staff to build a

secure and prosperous future for Salem. And we realize that IT IS THE WOMEN OF SALEM who can provide that future.

So, what do we intend to do? We are going to "wear Salem on our sleeves" more boldly, making sure folks know where we went to school. Knowing that when prospective students visit the campus, many decide to apply, we are going to be more aggressive about getting them to the campus. We are going to take more seriously the importance of giving financial support (Yeah! Let's earn enough to get that Student Commons built!). We hope to be more active "encouragers" of current students, and we hope to establish a program that will bring distinguished alumnae to campus to lead seminars in areas that you are interested in. We want to liven up some of our alumnae clubs so that you will be excited about becoming active in one when you are an "alum."

If we didn't like what we see at Salem (including YOU-- an outstanding student body!) we wouldn't be making the effort. We hope that our commitment will become more obvious to you as the year progresses.

Women's Suffrage

by Johanna Metzgar

In view of the upcoming national Presidential election, I thought it might be interesting to take a look at Salem students' response to the Women's Suffrage Movement of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and their response to the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment (the amendment which granted women the right to vote).

The Women's Suffrage Movement began in the United States in 1848 when women's rights activists drew up a "Declaration of Sentiments" to be discussed at their first convention at Seneca Falls. The Declaration outlined a number of demands in the realm of women's rights including, probably the most controversial of the demands, the right of women to vote.

Throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century, the Women's Movement gained followers, but it lacked an organized central authority.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, the Women's Movement was continuing to gain popularity and had made some headway in the area of women's suffrage. As industrialization increased and more women were entering the work force, these women began to demand the right to be heard by the government.

Perhaps Salem students in the early twentieth century recognized that they also had valuable ideas, and that they had the right to be heard, as well; for in 1912 the Salem College Suffrage League organized and selected officers. The meeting of the League was addressed by Miss Amelia Worthington, a prominent suffragist from Birmingham, Alabama. It is interesting to note that Mrs. R. E. Rondthaler, the wife of Salem's president at the time, was one of the fifteen charter members of the organization.

Little is known about the activities of the league, and unfortunately, they suspended their activities in 1913. However, the fact that the League formed at all is evidence that even in 1912 Salem students were actively concerned about the political world around them.

The National Suffrage Movement continued to gain ground, however. Suffragists began lobbying for presidential support of a federal amendment granting women the right to vote, and in January 1917, some suffragists even picketed the White House!

Finally, on January 10, 1918, with the support of President Woodrow Wilson behind it, the Nineteenth Amendment which granted women the right to vote was passed 274 to 136. Democrats voted 104 to 102 in

Marriage In India

by Saswati Datta

I vividly remember the final moment of my departure from "my nest." It was in a huge airport with people instantly buzzing around. My father's only advice was to "stick to your tradition," as I saw him crying for the first time in my life.

It's the oriental tradition. The biggest difference I find is in the planning of marriages. The institution of marriage in India dates back as far as early human civilization. In modern India, only two types of marriages are practised. The most popular and socially acceptable is arranged marriage. The couple getting married do not have any say in the decision concerning their future. They meet each other only once before marriage. This meeting is held in front of their parents.

The marriage ceremony itself is a long process and takes as long as five hours to complete. In India the oath-taking process is the most time consuming. During this time the man and his future wife take their oath in front of a priest, in the presence of a small flame which symbolizes the promises made between husband and wife since the beginning of time. This is

followed by the exchange of flowers between the couple. As the married woman's symbol, the husband places a red dot on his new wife's forehead from the first day of marriage.

I deeply respect the age old tradition of my country, but it has its faults, too. During the process of an arranged marriage, the bride's family has the burden of all expenditures and also pays a lump sum as dowry. Both giving and accepting of dowries are illegal in modern India, but it is still practiced. This brings a tremendous pressure on the bride's family and also on the newly married couples because it is like the buying and selling of a wife.

Currently the western world is making its presence felt in our country by bringing in the concept of love marriages. Indians are now using the old and the new methods. It remains to be seen and felt whether this concept has a good effect on our society. But so

far it has proved to be successful. Marriages of love do not involve dowries and decrease misunderstandings, therefore helping the newlyweds to plan and share their life according to their own desire and talents.

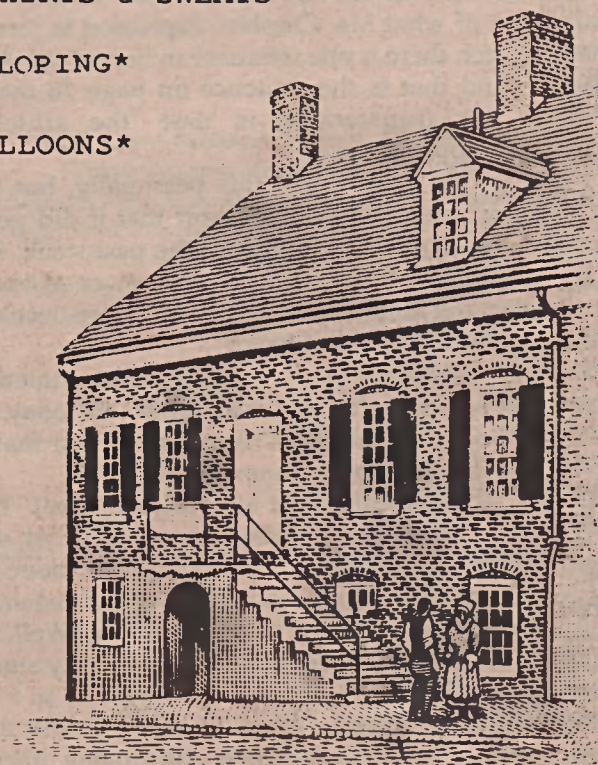
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