

# THE TWIG

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## World's largest small women's college

by Cynthia Church

The budding trees lining the driveway wave gently at those entering the campus. The well-groomed, too green grass is the envy of many visitors. The rainbow like azaleas add more color to the setting. Everything seems tranquil. Very proper. But appearances can be deceiving.

Since the doors opened to 19 faculty members and 125 students in 1899, Meredith College has been gaining progress. The traditional woman's college has clung to its reputation and is still attracting women from all over. Some 1700 women attend Meredith annually and the number of applicants is increasing. Yet although the number is increasing, new housing facilities are not a vision for the near future.

"We're not planning to grow," said President John E. Weems, "we're not planning to be the world's largest small women's college."

Last year the number of students attending Meredith was miscalculated, forcing the school to house many students elsewhere. Many freshmen were booked at the Ramada Inn until Carroll Anne was built to handle the overflow.

### What Attracts The Women?

The fact that Meredith is a Baptist woman's college attracts many students. "Because the school focuses on the individual as a total person, many women are drawn to the school," said Dean Dorothy Sizemore.

Another plus is the fact that Meredith encourages diversity in the students and faculty and attempts to create a balance between the Christian faith and free inquiry. The reputation of being a challenging academic school also interests many students.

When comparing Meredith to other woman's colleges in the South, Meredith is "among the leaders."

"We're the largest in the Southeast. Maybe the largest around. We're not as expensive as some. At least not in this part of the country," said Allen Burris, academic dean.

The cost of tuition including room and board for one year at Meredith is \$4,800; however, it will increase to \$5,200 during the 1984-85 academic school

year.

The atmosphere felt at Meredith is different than that at other woman's colleges. Old traditions such as the Daisy Chain at graduation, Cornhuskin' and 'Alice in Wonderland' involve both students and faculty, thus creating a unique bond in the Meredith community.

### It's All In The Mind

Receiving a broader knowledge in many different fields interests many college bound females. A liberal arts education attracts many women to Meredith College, along with the vocational education they can get. Meredith "invites" every student to learn and be educated. Some accept this invitation, whereas others can't or don't.

"There's no magic formula to a successful academic program," said Burris. "I can't put my finger on things we're not doing to academically attract more students."

"Our faculty compares favorably with small church colleges and about 70 percent of our faculty has their doctrine. I just wish we were as good as our reputation."

Though some aspects of the Meredith community are thought to be primitive, such as the restrictions enforced upon her students, Meredith is trying to push ahead. Preparing her students, faculty and knowledge for the 21 century so important to her growth.

"I had heard the saying 'riding the crest of the wave' and had never understood it until my son took up surfing," said Weems. "While watching him, I realized you can't ride the crest or you'll get wiped out. You have to ride in front of it. We (Meredith) will do anything possible to be in the front of the wave."

"We're preparing for the computer age," said Sizemore. "Computers will be in most of the administrative offices and classrooms and there will be a focus on computer courses."

Construction on a research building will begin this summer. Presently, psychology experiments are conducted in the basement of Poteat dormitory. The new facility should attract more stu-



The first view of Meredith is the administrative building, Johnson Hall - or as better known, the place where your date picks you up.

dents.

A new art building will also take shape in the near future. Although no plans as to where it will be built have been made, President Weems said the art department will be a major part of the campus soon.

Research into establishing a nursing program at Meredith is also being investigated. The program will work directly with cooperating Raleigh hospitals and will offer another branch to the academic tree at Meredith College.

Yet, what if these new additions to the Meredith community are not successful? What if women are not attracted to the campus? Would the strong traditional, woman's college that does not even allow men in the dorms turn co-ed?

"If there was a decrease in enrollment and there were financial problems, we would do anything to save the institution," said President Weems.

However, others seem to disagree. "No, I really don't think it would go co-ed," said Dean Sizemore.

"It won't happen anytime soon," said Dean Burris. "Not in my career. I'm not saying that it shouldn't."

Many things would prevent Meredith

from becoming co-ed. "Being located in Raleigh is one reason," said Weems.

The students are not isolated socially. With the malls, the capitol and North Carolina State University all within reach, the students are never at loss for things to do.

"The fact that Meredith has always been a hardcore academic school" would also prevent it from turning co-ed, said Burris. "I don't think the conditions are right to move in that direction. There's no one plotting to move us into becoming co-ed."

"As long as there are young women who want to go to a woman's college and as long as this college is a successful woman's college, there is not any reason to change. However, it would not be a big tragedy if we went co-ed. Davidson is still Davidson."

And Meredith is still Meredith.

And it will still be Meredith until all respect for it is lost as a woman's learning institution, until the quality of a woman's education has decreased and until the excitement and need for a strong, traditional unique woman's college disappears.

## Joan Bunting: New SGA president

by Jill Hensdale

In the recent first slate elections held at Meredith, Joan Bunting became the new SGA President for the 1984-85 school year. The senior has many

new and exciting ideas planned for Meredith in the upcoming year.

Joan first became involved in student government her freshman year when she

served as class secretary. She continued her interest in school government activities by serving as Sophomore class secretary and Junior class president.

Joan credits much of her interest in student affairs to her involvement with the 4-H club throughout high school. It was through this club that she learned much of what it takes to make ideas and projects work.

During the past year, several changes have been made to Meredith's SGA Constitution and By-Laws. Joan hopes that through her position as SGA President she can set these changes into motion.

With the addition of the Senate and Student Activities to be offered next year to Meredith students it means perhaps a fewer selection of activities and events but ones in which the majority of the students will want to participate in.

Meredith plays an important role in Joan's life. She is not only involved in student government but is also a member of the PHI society and the Barber Science Club. She enjoys getting involved in student activities and served as a Student Life Sub-committee chairperson this past year. She is a strong supporter of the Honor Code and feels that it is an important part of Meredith.

To her, the Honor Code goes beyond the campus by helping girls build their own honor codes in their personal lives.

The 1984-85 school year plans to be a busy one for Joan. She hopes to increase the enthusiasm on campus and to get more students involved in campus affairs. Joan wants all students to know that she is available to them and will listen to any complaints or suggestions they may have. She wants to make the coming year an exciting and eventful one.



Joan Bunting [far right] is seen here with Becky Evans, [center] and Tracy Thompson [far left].