

Dr. Carolyn Happer opens new exhibit at Duke University

Women's history exhibit is culmination of summer research project.

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Copy Editor

Dr. Carolyn Happer and Meredith senior Erika Parquet unveiled a display honoring the Woman's College of Duke University on Friday at Duke's Perkins Library.

Happer, a history professor at Meredith, along with Parquet, a public history major and Happer's student assistant in Meredith's Undergraduate Research Program, spent hours in the Duke archives this summer looking at old advertisements, yearbooks, and editions of the *Duke Chronicle*.

"We literally went through page by page," Parquet said. "We wanted to get a scope of those years at Duke."

Those years are 1930-1972, when all female Duke students lived on East

Campus, the Woman's College, and the male students lived on West Campus, Trinity College. This year marks the 30th anniversary of the merger of the two colleges.

To honor these women, Duke Alumni Affairs and the Duke Alumni Association sponsored a weekend-long celebration entitled, "The Woman's College, 1930-1972: A Legacy of Excellence and Leadership." The purpose of the weekend was to bring Woman's College alumnae to Duke once again to celebrate together with tours, seminars, panel discussions, receptions, entertainment

other events.

Happer, who graduated from the Woman's College in 1960 and got her Ph.D. from Duke in 1985, was a member of the Steering Committee for the Woman's College Celebration. The committee asked Happer to prepare an exhibit to commemorate the Duke women's years in a seemingly separate institution on East Campus.

"This was the perfect thing for me to do," Happer said. "I learned so much about my own craft, the job of the historian."

Happer actually designed the exhibit with help from Dr. Bill Price, a public history professor at Meredith,

and Pam Chastain, a graphic designer.

The exhibit features chronologically arranged news headlines about the Duke women of that particular decade, along with pictures of events, students and student body leaders. A timeline and advertisements from the different eras both run along the bottom of the panels.

Parquet said she enjoyed researching alongside Happer and learning about these different eras. But, she said, "One thing that was shocking was the blatant racism in those days. It was like a smack in the face."

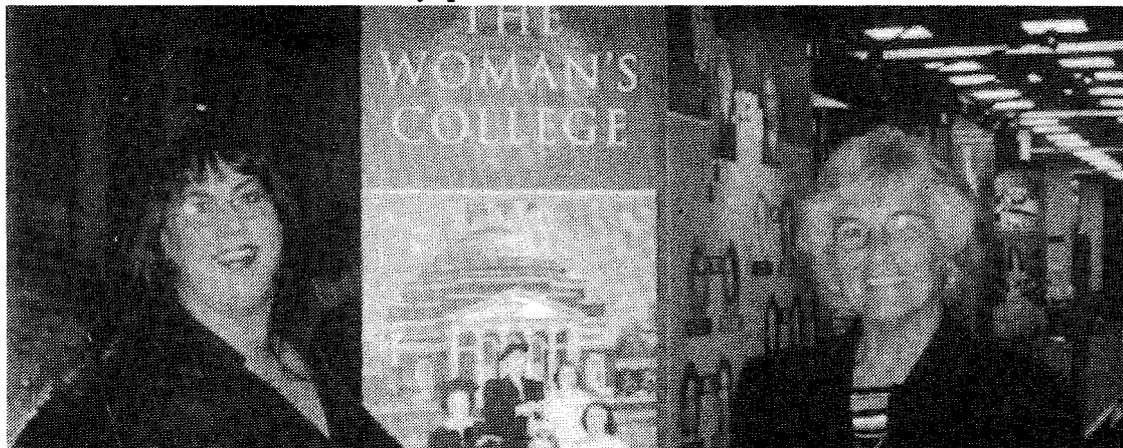
At a ceremony officially

kicking off the exhibit's display in the Perkins Library, Director of Alumni Affairs Laney Funderburk, also a 1960 Duke graduate, introduced Happer to the crowd of alumnae.

Funderburk told the crowd Dr. Bill King, a former Duke archivist, called Happer's exhibit "the best use of archival material in 30 years at Duke."

"The significance of it goes far beyond this weekend because the exhibit will be up for months," Funderburk said later. "Every undergraduate will pass by it several times a week, and it will remind current students of the history of Duke they may not already know."

Parquet said, "I was extremely pleased at the way the exhibit turned out. It was very exciting to see the results of our hard work this summer come to fruition on such a large scale. Everyone at Duke responded very positively to the exhibit."



Happer and Parquet at exhibit's opening on Friday.

PHOTO BY MICHAEL NOVAK

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