

# 125th Anniversary Edition

## Meredith College Hosts Celebratory Convocation and Unveils Historical Marker

Sasha Buslovich, Staff Writer

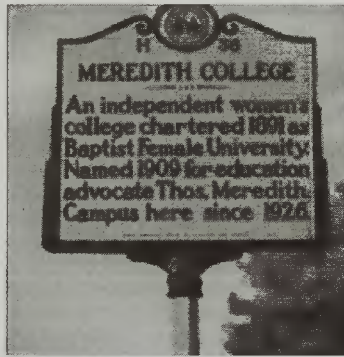


Photo Credit: Meredith College Instagram

Alumni, student, faculty, and staff gathered in Jones Auditorium on Feb. 24 to celebrate 125 years of Meredith history. The convocation started with the procession of current

Meredith professors in academic regalia. President Jo Allen welcomed the attendees, and Jean Jackson introduced Roger Crook, Professor Emeritus, who gave the convocation address.

In his 38 years on the faculty at Meredith, Dr. Crook taught Biblical studies, church history, and sociology of religion. During his address, Crook spoke about the influence of Thomas Meredith, for whom the college is named. Thomas Meredith was the founder and editor of *The Biblical Recorder* and an early leader of the Baptist Movement. In these positions he advocated for women's education and insisted on the creation of an institution to provide "a first-rate course of female education." This opinion was uncommon among his peers during the nineteenth century, but according

to Crook, "Thomas Meredith kept plugging for women's education through his publications." It wasn't until decades later, in 1891, that the North Carolina Legislature issued a charter for Baptist Female University. The name of the university changed in 1904 to the Baptist University for Women and finally became Meredith College in 1909, named after the leader whose vision helped to make the institution a reality.

While 125 years of history play a role in making Meredith what it is today, the present was also celebrated. The new era of Meredith history was commemorated by the unveiling of Meredith's new historical marker, replacing the one first installed in the early 1940s. The new marker reads, "An independent women's college chartered 1891 as Baptist Female

University. Named 1909 for education advocate Thos. Meredith. Campus here since 1926." Dr. Dan Fountain, Associate Professor of History, joked that "Writing the history of Meredith College in five to six lines is like writing the encyclopedia on a sticky note." Attendees at the Wednesday convocation watched a video of the dedication of the marker.

When asked about the overall experience of the celebration, Danielle Adams, sophomore at Meredith College, said, "I enjoyed Crook's convocation address and the way he took us back through the years. Listening to Meredith's history unfold intrigued me and made me proud to be a student here."

## Meredith Alums Janet Link and Sherry DiFilipo Celebrate with Select Works of Art

Alexa Ianuale, Staff Writer

For Meredith's 125th anniversary, graduates Janet Link, class of 1989, and Sherry DiFilipo, class of 2011, displayed 11 original pieces of their artwork in the lobby of the Cate Center. The reception for this exhibit was held on Feb. 25 at 4 p.m. in the Cate Center, with Link and DiFilipo in attendance. Refreshments were served and the crowd consisted of Meredith students and alumnae as well as professors and several N.C. State students. Titled *Divided by Decades - Bound by Tradition*, the exhibit focuses on the relationship between traditional thought and technique, but most importantly the relationship between student and professor. After graduating, Link eventually returned to Meredith College as an art professor, where she would teach DiFilipo.

Halfway through the reception both artists held a discussion, speaking about their relationship with one another and answering questions about their experience at Meredith.

"I've had the pleasure of having this relationship with her where we started as student and teacher and it has developed into this collegial relationship," Link stated. She went on to say that the self-portrait that was displayed in the exhibit was created as a demonstration for one of DiFilipo's classes. Link has six pieces displayed while DiFilipo has seven, and both unknowingly having similar inspiration behind their works, Link's being darkness and DiFilipo's being light.

When both alums were asked how their education and experience here at Meredith contributed to their overall

success as artists, they had rather different answers, yet both referenced their studies abroad. "Meredith had this program where you could go study in Paris with an American painter, and that really is the thing that changed my life. Without Meredith and without that program I doubt that I would be here doing this today," stated Link. DiFilipo, on the other hand, attributed the efforts she put into trying to be successful in order to receive financial aid to her success. "I almost feel like part of it was because I decided to do things, and then I did them. Just the act of doing that," stated DiFilipo. She added that she also planned a trip abroad to Italy for five weeks all on her own. "I planned that trip myself, and chose the school, and got just enough money to pay for the school and chanced that

I would have a place to stay," stated DiFilipo. Although she faced trials and tribulations along the way, she set her mind to something and achieved it while at school, a place she disdained until college.

This exhibit celebrates not only the accomplishments and talents of both students and faculty but the everlasting relationships they form here. Link and DiFilipo are shining examples of the potential those involved in the Meredith community are capable of, and it is evident in their works and their relationship. For anyone who missed the opportunity to attend the reception, the exhibit will be open until March 24th.

## Throwback Thursday Event Features Lip Sync Competition

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Photo Credits: Dr. Rebecca Duncan

Students were the focus of Throwback Thursday, held in Weatherspoon Gym during the week of festivities celebrating the 125th anniversary of the charter of the college. Classes competed with lip sync and dance battles representing an assigned decade.

The crowd ate pizza and drank sodas from tiny retro glass bottles.

The fashion statements were eye-catching: scrunchies, tie dye, bell bottoms, neon, and blue eye shadow, mini-skirts, and big hair. The bleachers were filled, with the crowd flowing over onto the gym floor.

The routines were evaluated by a panel of alumnae judges. Betsy Graves (2012) studied dance education at Meredith, and her favorite memory is teaching 120 classmates their senior professional for CORN. She also got to dance onstage with famed dancer and choreographer Twyla Tharp. Karen Brenneman (1994) studied business and political science at Meredith and is the Director of Technical Resources on campus. Her favorite memory is making friends that she has had since her freshmen year. Kathy Garnier (1984) says she has many fond memories from her time at Meredith,

but a special one she shared was preparing for her own lip sync contest at Meredith. She participated as "the streak" in Ray Steven's *The Streak*. She was surprised to learn many years later that her future husband was in that audience and remembered her performance. Woody Dicus (1974) was a Cornhuskin' co-chair for her class freshmen year, and the class shocked everyone when they took first place overall that night. Ruth Ann Dyer (1969) was a home economics and fashion major. She is a realtor for Fonville Morrissey. Her favorite memory is that when people got engaged, they would be thrown into the courtyard fountain in their pajamas.

Just as the judges began to deliberate, two campus security officers stepped out to stop the process. Then the crowd discovered why so many faculty

and staff had shown up in costumes as well. Several dozen of them stormed the floor and performed their own routine, and the crowd roared its appreciation.

**The Prize Winners were as follows:**

- 2016 (1960s, or 16's Going on 60): Decade Dance Award - choreography that best represented their decade
- 2017 (1970s, or Boogie Babes): Proud Meredith Award - for including important events from their decades
- AND Bust a Move Award, for most creative choreography
- 2018 (1990s, or 90s Babies): Raise the Roof Award - performance that got the audience most pumped up
- 2019 (1980s, or Ladies of the 80s): On Fleek Award - for best Lip Sync Performance, AND Stylin' and Profilin' Award for best costumes.