

General alumni group serves students of today, yesterday

By J.J. Warlick
Staff Writer

After graduating from the University, many students may feel their link to UNC will be permanently severed. But the General Alumni Association works hard to ensure that Carolina graduates are never very far removed from their alma mater.

The General Alumni Association is an organization founded to support the University, foster alumni fellowship and provide information, services and activities to both students and alumni.

Completely non-profit, the GAA should not be confused with the Educational Foundation (Rams Club), or the Development Office, which is the University's fund-raising organization, said Donald Beeson, assistant director of alumni affairs for club development.



All graduating students become alumni, whether they like it or not

"We're friend-raisers, not fund-raisers," he said.

Helping plan class reunions is just one of the services the GAA provides. By keeping a record on every graduate of the University, the GAA can help organizations or class officers contact graduates or faculty members, said Laurie Norman, assistant director of alumni affairs for alumni activities.

"We keep computerized records on all 170,000-plus Carolina alumni. Our department keeps track of marriages, divorces and deaths," Norman said.

The GAA also hosts the 0-Year Reunion in the spring, which is a free reception with food and entertainment for graduating seniors, and helps with the senior awards program, Beeson said.

They provide career assistance and programs for alumni and seniors and sponsor the Alumni Senior Connection,

a networking service which puts seniors in touch with alumni, Beeson said. The GAA is also the sponsor of the popular singing group, the Clef Hangers.

"We want students to have a positive experience at Carolina. We want them to take advantage of what our organization has to offer so that when they leave they will look back on a positive experience," Norman said.

The GAA organizes local alumni clubs across the country which keep graduates in touch with other alumni and with the University as well, Beeson said. Alumni clubs plan activities and events for all the Carolina alumni in their area.

"Ninety-two percent of all Carolina alumni live in an area where there is a Carolina Alumni club," Beeson said.

Bonnie Bacnik, club chairwoman for the Durham County Alumni Club, said the club usually planned an event for the fall, an indoor event for the winter, such as the opening of a new building, and a picnic in the spring.

"Our most recent event was at the Ackland Art Museum, where the director spoke and showed us around. That drew in a lot of people," Bacnik said.

"We send out newsletters twice a year letting people know the whole range of our activities."

Young Alumni Clubs have formed in the eight areas across the country where students are most likely to move after graduation, such as New York City and Atlanta. These clubs host receptions for recent graduates new to the area.

Luann Hyatt, chairwoman of the Washington Young Alumni Club, said her club held its first event two weeks ago. "We welcomed recent graduates to the area at a happy hour."

More than 50,000 alumni are mem-

bers of the GAA. About one-third of Carolina's alumni optionally support the GAA with annual fees. Annual dues for individuals are \$25, and for a Carolina couple they are \$30. A lifetime fee is \$400 for individuals and \$500 for a Carolina couple. The money from membership dues provides the primary source of revenue for the GAA, Norman said.

"To encourage new students to join, we offer membership at half-price," Beeson said.

"Membership is open to anyone," he said. One doesn't have to attend the University to become a member.

Benefits of membership include receiving the organization's magazine and its newsletter. Members are also given priority when space for events is limited.

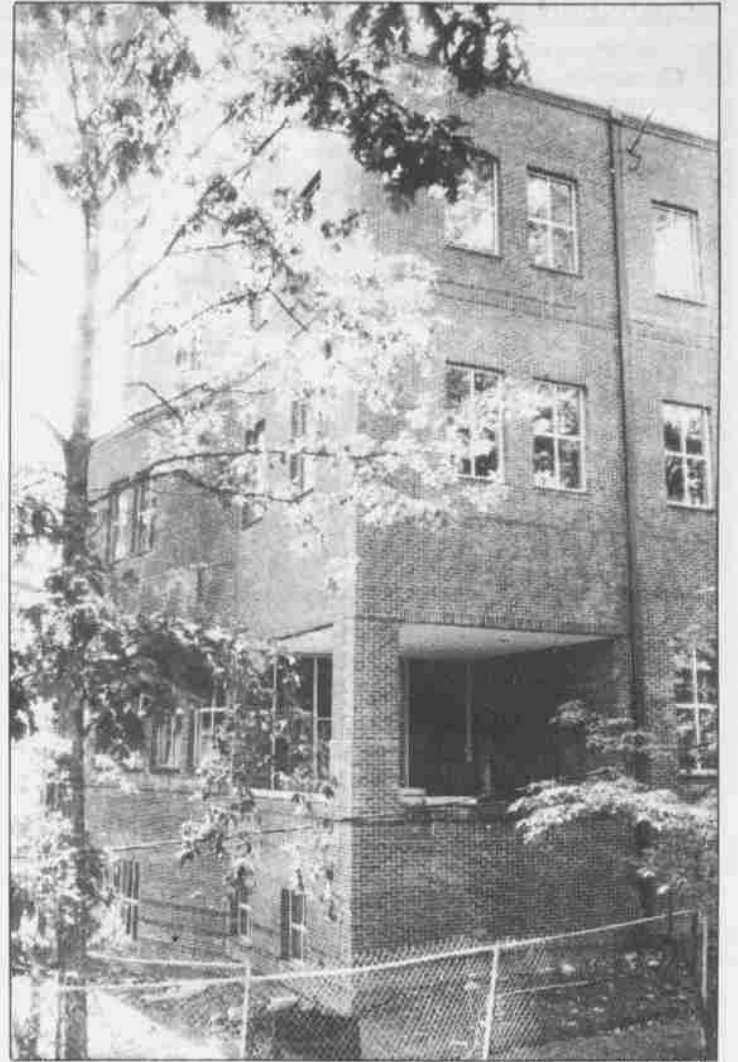
Currently located in an old apartment building on Columbia Street, the GAA will be moving this summer to a new building, the George Watts Hill Alumni Center, located beside Kenan Stadium.

"We're excited about having a new facility and bringing more aspects of campus into the alumni center," Beeson said.

Norman said students would be a large part of the new center. Some of the career programs and the 0-Year Reunion will be held there, he said. One of the new aspects of the center will be a faculty club, a place where faculty and students can meet together, Norman said.

When the GAA first made plans to build the new center, there was negative student reaction because the site for the center was in a wooded area, where trees would have to be cut down.

"I don't think (protesting) students realized how much the new facility had to offer them," Beeson said.



The General Alumni Association will be moving to its new building this summer

Individual schools' alumni organizations raise funds for extra edge

By Ginger Meek
Senior Writer

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is not just the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

It's the UNC School of Pharmacy and the UNC business school. The law school and the School of Journalism and Mass Communication and the College of Arts and Sciences and the UNC School of Education.

Having all these separate academic bodies means separate fund raising and thus separate alumni organizations.

Most schools within the University organize activities for and solicit gifts from graduates from their school independent of General Alumni Association events.

In addition, 10,000 alumni donate at least \$50 every year to the Educational Foundation, making them members of the Rams Club.

For most schools, those financial gifts make a margin of excellence possible, developmental administrators said.

"If we lived off of state monies, we'd be a mediocre institution," said Gail Perry, director of development for the business school. "It's the private monies we receive that make the difference between being outstanding and average."

Todd Linsley, assistant dean for de-

velopment for the law school, agreed that state funding was responsible for the core of the education provided by the school, but donations allowed further development.

The College of Arts and Sciences is 90 percent dependent on state funding, said Victoria Gless, director of communications for the Arts and Sciences Foundation.

It is the most dependent of any unit of the University, she said.

State provisions, however, are declining due to budget cuts, resulting in an increased dependence on alumni gifts in order to maintain the previous level, said Jan Elliott, associate professor and assistant to the dean of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication. An alumni association not affiliated with any academic unit, The Educational Foundation was chartered in 1938 to raise money for athletic departments. State funding of university athletic departments is prohibited by state law, said Moyer Smith, executive vice president of the foundation.

"All we're doing is trying to create good will and provide funds for men and women to get an education," Smith said. The Educational Foundation also funds the construction or renovation of athletic facilities for UNC teams.

The Educational Foundation, better known as the Rams Club, has contribu-

tors just as concerned with bettering education as they are with athletics, Smith said.

Recent research from the UNC Office of Development comparing Educational Foundation donors with the University's academic donors found 75 percent of The Educational Foundation's top donors also donate money — often more money — to various academic bodies within the University.

Also, 23 of the top 50 gifts to the Bicentennial Campaign, accounting for

49 percent of that \$55 million total, are contributions from Educational Foundation members, Smith said. It's not all about athletics, he said.

Kevin Almond, assistant dean for development in the School of Pharmacy, said, "We want them (alumni) to feel some affection for the University, but we also want them to give back to the school so other people can have the same experiences they had."

The Arts and Sciences Foundation is "purely in the business of raising money for the College of Arts and Sciences,"

Gless said. GAA coordinates research and events such as alumni reunions. The only fund raising GAA does is to support itself, she said.

Allegiance to a particular school within the University is common among graduates.

Elliott said of the journalism school: "It's a small school, and it's easy to have a mentor. There is a family sense about being in this school — there are a lot of close ties."

Not only do ties exist between alumni and a school, but also between alumni

and students.

Linsley said law school alumni volunteers are active in many phases of the school's activity, from social events to a mentor program with students.

Student and alumni interaction helps students to "realize the legacy," Linsley said. "They become fond of the alumni when they see what the alumni have done."

Mary Ann Weathers, executive director for alumni affairs in the School of Education, said graduate students participated in alumni fund-raising activities by selling lapel pins, bumper stickers and other paraphernalia donning the school's new logo — the intertwined "NC" that the athletic department uses with an added red apple.

This interaction often encourages students to give to the school after graduation, she said.

Alumni activities with the journalism school are organized through Journalism Alumni and Friends Association.

Mentor programs, some involving student travel to large U.S. cities, allow students to spend a day on the job with a journalism graduate working in their chosen field, Elliott said.

"It gives the students insight into what the job is really like," she said. "And they know that if they have a question, there's somebody out there."

Putting Money in the Wishing Well

Percentage of living alumni from each school who contribute to UNC-CH

School	Number of alumni	Percentage
Journalism and Mass Communication	4,600	30%
Business (MBA)	3,500	40%
Law	19,700	33%
Education	16,500	15%
Pharmacy	4,500	40-45%

Source: Representatives of each school



Order of the Bell Tower members act as representatives of the University at alumni functions

Order of the Bell Tower links student and alumni concerns

By Robin Lowe
Staff Writer

Relax, close your eyes and think of alumni.

For many students, images of former University students parking their BMWs in Rams Club spaces, enjoying the luxurious benefits of a new alumni center while at the same time ignoring the concerns and needs of today's students come to mind.

Typically, the student population does not hold alumni of the University in high regard.

In 1980, the General Alumni Association recognized this general perception of alumni by students and formed The Order of The Bell Tower in an effort to bridge the gap between students and alumni.

The OBT consists of 55 student members who represent the University at alumni functions. They also promote awareness of the importance of alumni to the University.

"We are able to have contact with alumni and express student points of view. We are representative of the student body in that we help communicate student interests as a whole," said OBT President Brian Baynard.

Members apply in the spring semester and are competitively selected on the basis of diversity. "We want to have informed, articulate ambassadors of the University, representative of the diversity of the student body," said OBT

adviser Laurie Norman.

As a member of the National Student Alumni Association/Student Foundation Network, OBT provides greeters and hosts for class reunions, the Annual Alum Run and Commencement. OBT members also greet guests at pre-game activities and in the Chancellor's box during football season.

They offer exam survival kits, high school workshops on college life and "Who's New on Campus," a book of freshmen pictures and majors, in addition to serving as liaisons between the University and alumni.

"They do an excellent job," said Catherine Williams, coordinator of special events, who works closely with members on occasion. "They are very dedicated to the alumni and the University. We can't do without them."

"Anytime I need wonderful help, I call them. They're such an asset to the University."

OBT also works to inform seniors, soon to be alumni, of what the GAA has to offer because eventually all graduating seniors are transformed into alumni, whether they want to be or not.

OBT will work closely with this year's seniors, providing a representative as a senior marshal for the first time and awareness of the GAA.

Seniors can take advantage of two of OBT's new programs, the 0-year reunion and the extern program. The 0-year reunion, held during the spring, is a reception for the senior class that

offers an opportunity to learn about the GAA, Norman said.

The extern program provides interested students with a short-term internship with an alumnus to explore a career during Spring Break. Twenty-five students participated last year, which was the first year of the program, Norman said.

Alumni also benefit from OBT services. "The alumni association has grown increasingly more aware of the student experience at Carolina," Norman said. "Having a positive experience at Carolina makes the students more likely to be positive, loyal and active alumni."

OBT members are gearing up for the Bicentennial Campaign kickoff on Oct. 11. They will greet guests, hand out name tags and assist with handicapped seating, among other things, to make sure the kickoff runs smoothly.

"Imagine if you were an alumnus, coming back," Norman said. "It's an added bonus to have a student greet you and hand you a brochure. That's a nice touch."

Anytime people can chat with students and have a good conversation with them, it reflects positively on the University, Williams said.

Alumna Anne Cates of Chapel Hill said, "I cannot say enough nice things about The Order of the Bell Tower. They are wonderful about cooperating with University activities and functions."

"(The alumni) are proud to have them as University students," she added.