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Cover

A near-capacity crowd witnessed Furman's 21-16 victory over VMI on September 27. The Paladins went on to win the Southern Conference Championship in their last year in Sirrine Stadium. See article about the stadium on page 2. Photograph by David Burke.
The Furman Band entertains at halftime during the game with East Tennessee State in Sirrine Stadium in 1977.
A fond farewell to Sirrine Stadium

by Jim Stewart

The Paladins' last game in Sirrine Stadium this year marked the end of an era in Furman's history.

Sirrine Stadium can no longer claim to be the finest football facility in South Carolina. Nor is it still conveniently located or easily accessible for the majority of Furman supporters. The passage of time and the winds of change have altered those once indisputable facts.

But one thing remains true: Sirrine Stadium has served with distinction since 1936 as the home of Furman football. From the "House of Magic" (as the '36 team was called) and the Purple Hurricane to the Paladins, Mighty White Man and the Baker Bunch, Sirrine has hosted them all. In so doing, it has become a part of Furman lore, a landmark and rallying point for alumni and friends, and the last tangible link to the old campus in downtown Greenville.

Now, that too has come to an end. With the conclusion of the 1980 season — one in which Furman claimed the Southern Conference Championship — the final chapter of Furman football in Sirrine Stadium was written. Construction is progressing on a new on-campus facility which will be ready for the 1981 season.

And the shouts and whistles that filled downtown Greenville during breezy autumn afternoons will fade into memories of cherished victories and agonizing defeats, of comebacks and setbacks, and of a time when, for most of us, a football game was far more important than income taxes, mortgage payments and buying new shoes for the kids.

For 44 years, Sirrine Stadium has been an integral part of the Furman experience. While some of the surrounding area has deteriorated badly, the stadium has remained a constant. Perhaps that is its real legacy; though the old campus gave way to more modern facilities, Sirrine endured as a symbol of Furman's early years.

What will become of the stadium? The question is yet unanswered. Many would like to see it donated to or bought by either the Greenville County School District or Greenville High School, which has always played its home football games there. Others suggest the area could be rezoned for construction of a shopping mall or apartment complex. There are also those who feel the city should purchase it for youth football games, concerts and various outdoor activities.

The issue is an emotional one. Many Greenville citizens never considered Sirrine Stadium to be Furman's property, but the entire city's. Indeed, the city helped pay for it, and it was initially called Greenville Municipal Stadium. Even after Furman had repaid the borrowed money and acquired sole possession, it allowed the facility to be used by a number of outside groups. Greenvillians past and present look at the stadium as a part of their lives.

Without doubt, the decision will cause mixed reactions among local citizenry, and that in itself is a tribute to the role the stadium has played over the last four decades.

In the mid-1930s, it became apparent that Furman needed a new football stadium. Manly Field was old, outdated and too small to house the large crowds which turned out weekly to watch the powerhouses of that era perform. The turf at Manly was poor, drainage was awful and when it rained, the field became a quagmire. The grandstands were rickety and dangerous; one section of the bleachers collapsed during a game, injuring a number of fans. The situation obviously needed improvement.

After an effort to purchase the city's Graham Field fell through, a group of alumni headed by J. E. Sirrine mounted a fund-raising drive that netted $20,000 for a new stadium. With help from the city and the South Carolina Federal Emergency Relief Association, construction began in December 1935.

According to Henry B. McKoy of Greenville, retired co-owner of the Morris-McKoy Company, which built the stadium, the original plans called for an ambitious facility, with two decks and a large seating capacity. But there was not enough money during those depression years to finance such a major project, so engineer J. E. Sirrine designed a more feasible version, seating 13,600, that proved acceptable. The stadium was later named for

Right: Coaches Bob King and Bob Smith, who played football at Furman in the thirties, join in singing the alma mater during 1980 Homecoming ceremonies.
Betty Galloway, 1952 Homecoming Queen, was one of 37 Homecoming Queens crowned in Sirrine Stadium. Now Mrs. Ryan B. Eklund, she married her escort.

Sirrine in honor of his efforts and support on its behalf. As McKoy describes it, the project was beset by problems. Rain continually put a damper on things, often causing a tributary of Reedy River to rise and flood the field. Eventually, the stream was diverted beneath the stadium and now serves as an underground watering system. The crew had to drill through solid rock to lay the sewer, and had to build wooden rivets to keep the banks from collapsing during drilling. A workman set himself on fire while stamping seat numbers into the wooden bleachers with an acetylene torch.

By late summer of 1936, though, the problems were apparently overcome and the stadium seemed set. Then the great rain came; as McKoy recalls it, "About eight inches fell overnight." And with more rain came more trouble.

"I'll never forget going to the stadium after the rain stopped, walking up the back walkway, looking down and seeing an absolute lake where the field was supposed to be," McKoy says. "The place was filled from seat to seat. It had been flooded before, but nothing like that. I was stunned — even the banks had washed away."

As if that weren't enough, McKoy also had to contend with flooding at one of his warehouses in another part of town. After battling the problem there, he returned home for dinner and a short rest before tackling the elements again. "I sat down in my easy chair by the radio for a few minutes of relaxation, and the first thing I heard was the announcer saying the Morris-McKoy Warehouse was on fire. All I could think was, 'Lord, you're sure enough punishing me today.'"

But the fire was extinguished and the stadium had drained within 24 hours — only to reveal eight inches of mud covering what had been the field. "We had to put down new sod and plant the grass again," McKoy says. "That's why they had to wait until the season was almost over before they could start playing there."

Finally, on October 31 the field was ready, and Dizzy McLeod's "House of Magic" christened the stadium with a 14-13 victory over Davidson. Two weeks later, the team clinched its last state championship with a 23-6 triumph over the University of South Carolina.

The star of that team, Bob King, probably has more memories of Sirrine Stadium than anyone else associated with Furman. King was involved in Furman football as player or assistant or head coach during most of the 40-year period from 1933 to 1972. Now director of facilities for physical activities at Furman, he still recalls those first two games as if they had happened yesterday.

"I remember blocking an extra point to save the Davidson game," he says. "But my most vivid memory is of walking off the field afterwards. The Davidson coach had given his players Hershey bars to help them regain..."
their energy. Those boys came over, picked out one of us and shared their candy. I thought that was something.

"We dedicated the stadium before the South Carolina game (November 14). They had a fellow on their team from Greenville who was a good friend of mine, and on one kickoff, he came down and knocked me for a loop. So the next kickoff, I went looking for him and returned the favor. After the game, we acted like nothing had happened."

In King's opinion, few people understand the significant role Sirrine Stadium played in the development of collegiate football in South Carolina. It was easily the best stadium in the state when it was constructed, and King feels it sparked a surge of interest in the sport: "I think the other schools felt compelled not to let Furman outdo them."

While competing schools like Clemson and South Carolina have expanded and built large, impressive stadiums for their usually large, impressive teams, Sirrine has remained basically the same over the years. Though some of its facilities — dressing rooms, press box, rest areas — are barely adequate, if that, one part of the stadium is unsurpassed: the playing field.

Many have suggested, sometimes only half-jokingly, that the Sirrine field somehow be transported to the new stadium. Hubert Gardner, athletic grounds supervisor at Furman for the last 20 years, claims that wouldn't have caused much of a problem. "We could've stripped all the grass from Sirrine, sodded the new field with it, and still have had a solid field at Sirrine next season," he says. "Sirrine's got such a strong root system that, as long as we keep it aerated and fertilized, it'll keep growing. We haven't planted any new seed there in 18 years."

When Gardner arrived at Furman in the early '60s, the field wasn't in such outstanding condition. The drainage system was and still is excellent, but the field itself was "kind of bare, had a lot of wild grass on it." So Gardner and his crew began with the basics, fertilizing, liming and enriching the soil.

At the same time, as supervisor of the golf course, he was having trouble cutting a super-tough brand of Bermuda grass on the tee boxes. He reasoned that the Bermuda would be perfect for the football field, and with the help of King, his coaches and members of the team, he transplanted grass from the tee boxes to the stadium. The exercise took about a week to complete during the summer of 1962 — "We had half the crew transporting plugs while the other half did the plugging" — and when the season began, the field was in excellent condition.

Gardner is justifiably proud of his work at Sirrine. Many have praised it as the finest playing field in the Southern Conference, better even than the artificial surfaces of some schools. And as long as Furman owns the stadium, Gardner will be in charge of its maintenance.

Still, the idea of an on-campus facility brings a gleam to his eye. "Oh man, it'll be great," he says. "The proximity, the safety factor, and not having to make all those trips downtown . . . I'm really looking forward to it.
I'll miss Sirrine — I've built a lot of memories over 20 years — but I'll baby the new field just like I did the old one.”

King feels much the same way. "As far as the football program moving forward, I think the new stadium is as important as the change from Manly to Sirrine," he says. "We'll draw bigger crowds, we'll be better off financially and students won't have any trouble with transportation.

"Besides, football has become more than just a spectator sport. Now, it's a family outing, an all-day affair; folks come out early and stay late, tailgating and socializing. The new campus is perfect for that; there's no way you could do the same thing at Sirrine.'"

Yet King admits to a certain inexplicable "twinge" when he thinks about the move. "I had the same feeling when we changed campuses, though, and look how well that turned out," he says. "I'm sure the same will be true again."

That twinge was caused by King's reflections on days gone by. It's not surprising; memories can hardly be turned on and off like a light switch, especially when such a large part of your life has revolved around one special place. Interestingly, his thoughts focus more on special individuals and moments, rather than "that big win" or "that loss." Some examples:

On his family: "My brother played there, my son played for seven years, first in high school and then at Furman, and my daughter cheered like the devil there. We almost turned it into a home away from home."

On the fans: "Oh, gosh, the people used to misbehave much more a long time ago than they do now. There's more vandalism and trouble in the neighborhood around the stadium these days, but the fan behavior has definitely improved. Back when I was coming along, Clemson was our big rival, and after those games there'd always be a fifth quarter; folks would fight all the way from Sirrine to Main Street. Sometimes you'd see more action afterwards than during the games."

On the "Football for Fun Bunch," 1963-69: Because of financial problems, the board of trustees voted in 1962 to award scholarship aid to athletes solely on the basis of need, academic proficiency and general qualifications. It seemed a realistic decision, but it resulted in some rough years for the football team.

Says King: "We called that our poverty program. We went through several bad years, but I coached some mighty fine young men during that period. It was a gloomy time, but it had its rewarding moments. And we built a lot of character."

On the 1970 season, when the team finished 8-3 after successive one-win seasons in 1968 and 1969. It was King's finest year, and he remembers two games in particular:

"One could almost hear the voices of games long forgotten... exploding in one final hurrah."

"We played Presbyterian in one of the worst electrical storms you'll ever see. Lightning all over, rain pelting down — you name it, we had it. The clock operator was knocked out when lightning struck the scoreboard.

"We were severely criticized by the local press for not calling the game, but that wasn't really the coaches' job. Besides, when they asked me about it, I said I wasn't about to call it off when we were winning. And ol' Coach (Cally) Gault at PC said he wasn't going to call it off when he was behind. So we played." Furman won, 19-7.

Later that season, the Paladins met The Citadel: "We had a player hurt in the first half — Peyton "Pappy" Barton, big country boy from Virginia. We thought it was serious and sent him to the hospital.

"But he came back raring to go for the second half. He was badgering me to get back in the game, so I figured maybe the rest had done him some good and sent him in. Darned if he didn't recover a fumble that led to the winning touchdown." The score: Furman 28, The Citadel 21.

Perhaps Bob King's most lingering memory, though, will be of a time some eight years after he coached his last game in the stadium. It was September 13, 1980, shortly after Furman had opened its last home season in Sirrine with a 28-7 victory over Presbyterian. The stands were empty, the field deserted except for a few neighborhood kids enjoying a pickup game.

King, who lives near Sirrine, was completing his daily five-kilometer run when he spotted the stadium gates open. "I decided I wanted to circle the field one time while I had the chance, so I asked the cleanup crew not to lock up until I'd made one trip around."

And for a moment, he was back on the field, blocking an extra point, pacing the sidelines, "kicking up dust and carrying on . . . I was just gliding out there. You know, the grass was still as soft as it ever was."

It was an appropriate scene, a fitting farewell. One could almost hear the voices of games long forgotten, from the last state championship in 1936 to the first conference title in 1978, exploding in one final hurrah. The solitary figure of Bob King represented the other coaches — Dizzy McLeod, R.W. Smith, H.E. Smith, Bill Young, Homer Hobbs, Art Baker and Dick Sheridan — and the countless young men who contributed in mind, body and spirit to the thrills of days past and the shape of things to come.

Jim Stewart, class of 1976, is news director at Furman.
Whatever Don Kubler does, he does with gusto. Even when he doesn't mean to.

Take his work with arson investigation, for example. Two years ago an insurance adjustor called to ask if he would help him find out if an insured homeowner had burned down her house. Kubler, who knew little about arson investigation except that he would have to go into the charred remains of the home to collect samples of debris, told the adjustor he would rather not. The adjustor pleaded, saying he was desperate, that no one else around Greenville could help him, so Kubler consented to help — just once.

Since then Kubler, who teaches chemistry at Furman, has investigated 26 fires for insurance companies and analyzed approximately 175 samples from fires for law enforcement agencies and fire departments. Besides that, he has become a walking textbook on arson.

"Arson is a huge crime involving billions of dollars," he will tell you. "In terms of dollar losses, it accounts for more than armed robbery, auto theft and other related crimes put together. Arson kills about 1,000 people a year in this country."

The trouble is, says Kubler, that the nice young man next door and the little old lady up the street have become arsonists. "There's been a gross change in national attitudes. People think it's all right to burn down their houses and take the money from the insurance companies. They don't realize that if you burn down your house, you aren't hurting the insurance company; you're hurting the stockholders and other policyholders who will have to pay higher rates. You're also depreciating your property so that taxes are no longer collectable, and you may kill someone."

No one knows what to do about arson because of the complexity of the problem, says Kubler. For one thing, no single agency has the responsibility for investigating arson. If firemen suspect a fire was set on purpose, investigators from the local fire department, the local sheriff's department or the State Law Enforcement Division may investigate the fire. If firemen don't notice anything suspicious, the fire may not be investigated at all.

Besides that, says Kubler, arson is a hard crime to prove. Since people usually burn their own (or someone else's) property at night, there are seldom any eye witnesses. Most cases against suspected arsonists must be built entirely on circumstantial evidence, and evidence is not easy to produce since the person who sets the fire intends for the fire to consume the evidence.

This is where people like Don Kubler come in. Until recently insurance companies did not attempt to dispute fire claims, because they were not equipped to prove arson themselves and they couldn't get much help from law enforcement officials and fire departments. They just paid the claims and raised their rates. Now, because of tremendous losses, they have begun to fight back by hiring their own investigators.

Not just anyone is qualified to investigate fires. People who examine the remains of buildings for signs of arson must know a lot about fire: how it starts and spreads and how objects react to various intensities of heat. Those who perform laboratory analysis of samples of debris must be chemists or have some training in chemistry.
The first time Kubler went into a burned house, he did not know anything about the standard techniques of arson investigation. "I knew enough about the chemistry of flames and fires to know how fires spread, but that was about all," he says.

Kubler was overwhelmed by the sight of the destruction and the terrible mess. "The adjustor asked me to see if I could find evidence of gasoline or some other accelerant. I said, 'Man, you're crazy!' He said people do it all the time, so I agreed to take some samples, but I wasn't very optimistic.'"

Kubler took samples at a sliding glass door in a back room, where the fire had obviously started and burned through the roof. He noticed that the drapes at three windows in the living room at the front of the house had burned, although there was no evidence that fire had crossed the ceiling or floor to set them on fire, so he took samples of the drapes. He put the samples in plastic bags, labeled them and took them back to Furman.

Since it was the week before exams, Kubler threw the samples into a corner of his office, where they lay until the end of the term. Then he called his friend, chemistry professor Richard Henderson at Francis Marion College, who he knew had been working for some insurance companies in the lower part of the state. Henderson offered to meet him in Columbia and explain the methods he used in arson investigation. So Kubler went to Columbia.

"I found out I had done essentially the sort of thing I should have, without knowing it," says Kubler. "When I came home, I went back out to the burned house and took samples from the middle of the living room floor, where the fire had not burned. This gave me a good reference point."
For Kubler, investigating a case of arson is like putting a giant jigsaw puzzle together.

Using the laboratory methods explained by Henderson, Kubler analyzed the samples and found evidence of gasoline in the ones taken from the drapes and at the sliding glass door. Obviously, someone had set several different fires around the house. The fire at the door had spread widely and done a lot of damage, while the fires at the windows had gone out without spreading because the drapery material did not burn very well.

By the time Kubler finished work on his first case, he was hooked on arson investigation. He began reading everything about arson he could get his hands on and accumulated a large file of newspaper clippings and magazine articles. He attended workshops sponsored by the South Carolina Fire Academy in Columbia and took a short course sponsored by the National Association of Arson Investigators in Chicago.

News of his arson work soon got around and he began to get requests from other insurance companies. When the Greenville Sheriff's Department and the Greenville Fire Department learned that he could analyze samples, their arson investigators began bringing their samples to him instead of sending them to the SLED laboratory in Columbia. Other nearby fire departments also began to seek his help and he has even analyzed samples for SLED.

Kubler is now a member of the International Association of Arson Investigators. He is also working with others to produce a handbook on arson for the Appalachian Council of Governments.

When Kubler talks about arson, he becomes as excited as he does when he teaches chemistry. Whether he is talking to one person or a roomful of students, he lectures, gestures and gives examples to illustrate his points.

For him, investigating a case of suspected arson is like putting a giant jigsaw puzzle together. "You have to put the whole story together before you can prove a fire was set," he says. "You have to locate the origin of the fire and explain how it started. You have to prove that the fire could not have started accidentally and that someone, usually the owner, had a motive and an opportunity to set this fire. Usually you have to prove that an accelerant — like gasoline or kerosene — was used at the origin of the fire to speed up the process of burning."

Now, when Kubler goes into a burned building, he knows exactly what to look for. After determining where the fire started by finding the most severely burned area, he looks for evidence that the fire could have started accidentally. Did lightning strike the house? Did someone go to sleep and drop a cigarette behind the cushions on the couch? Was there an electrical malfunction? Did a circuit overheat?

If he cannot find any possible accidental cause of the fire, he begins to look for evidence of arson. Almost
Fire Chief Jim Sosebee of Belton, South Carolina, tells Kubler about events which led up to the fire.
invariably, he says, anyone attempting to set a fire will use some flammable liquid like gasoline to make the fire burn more rapidly and there will be signs of its use. For instance, if a floor or ceiling burns uniformly, it was most likely covered with a flammable liquid. Irregular burn patterns on floors or walls also show where flammable liquids were poured or splashed. Frequently, says Kubler, a person will pour gasoline all through the house, leaving a trail to the back door.

“What most people who set fires don’t know is that it’s very difficult to totally and completely consume these accelerants. They always put enough gasoline or kerosene on to make sure to get a good fire going. The liquid runs down and seeps into the fiber of the wood on the floor; it goes down into the cracks and behind the baseboards. Flames have hot regions and cool regions. When wood burns, it usually leaves a residue of carbon, and carbon in the cooler regions of the fire has an amazing ability to absorb things. Gasoline or kerosene gets into the structure of carbon and stays trapped in it for a long time. If the fire is very extensive, almost everything may burn and disappear, but usually we can find evidence of accelerants because we just need very small amounts.”

In his investigations, Kubler has run into some strange situations. Recently, he recalls, an insurance adjustor asked him to visit a burned house in a nearby town to confirm that the fire had been caused by an electrical malfunction, as the local fire department had concluded. The house, which was fairly new, he was told, belonged to a fine, churchgoing couple, so there was no question of arson; the insurance company simply wanted confirmation of an electrical fire so it could, in turn, sue the electrical contractor.

“As soon as I walked in, I knew it couldn’t have been an electrical fire,” says Kubler. “There was something peculiar about it. There was no way the fire could have spread the way it did, if it was an electrical fire. The only way there could have been uniform burning like that was if the fellow had spread some accelerant all over the ceiling of the basement.”

Before doing anything, Kubler went home, called the insurance adjustor and asked him to check further on the couple. With more investigation, the adjustor learned that the couple was far behind with their house payments and that, in fact, the mortgage company had already begun foreclosure proceedings. Kubler then went back to the house, took samples and subsequently proved the presence of an accelerant. “As it turned out,” explains Kubler, “the man had sprayed an accelerant into the place where the main electrical wire came in to try to make it look like an electrical short had melted the wire.”

Frequently, says Kubler, problems between husband and wife will lead one of them to burn their home for revenge, as well as money. In one instance, Kubler investigated a fire which appeared to have been set by a woman who was mad at her husband for leaving the country on a business trip. In another case, a man’s ex-wife arranged to have his house burned and then claimed half of the insurance payment on the grounds that she was still his common-law wife.

In almost every case, Kubler says, people who attempt to burn their homes have terrible problems which make them act irrationally. “People are so pressed, they act crazy when they do things like this, because most of them end up losing a great deal. Suppose I have a house worth $45,000 and contents worth about half of that. If it burns and I get $50,000 — after depreciation — from the insurance company, what have I got? How can I replace anything that’s precious to me? People want to get their hands on cash but they usually take a terrific loss to do so.

“I’m always depressed when I see one of these houses. All of their precious things — photographs, books, children’s toys, knickknacks they’ve collected over a lifetime — all a dirty, soggy mess.”

The most common kind of arson now — burning cars — is a sign of the times. “They’re burning cars right and left these days,” says Kubler. “In Greenville County last year we had 500 cars, with an average payoff of $2,000, that were known to be arson cases. In South Carolina, we had nearly 18,000.”

Although people are burning all kinds of cars, trucks and vans, he says, their favorite is a Pontiac Trans Am, which is very expensive and gets only a few miles to the gallon of gasoline. “A guy goes out and buys a fancy vehicle. He gets 10, 12 miles to the gallon, his payments are very high, he can’t meet them, he can’t get much back by selling it, so he burns it.”

Contrary to public opinion, says Kubler, it is very hard to make cars burn. In fact, tests show that an automobile is one of the safest products you can buy as far as burning is concerned. Ordinarily, most of the surface materials, like vinyl upholstery, will burn only as long as you hold a match to them; remove the match and the fire goes out. If a fire starts accidentally under the hood, it will burn only a few minutes — until it consumes the gasoline in the carburetor. It won’t spread to the rest of the car because a fire wall protects the passenger compartment and there isn’t much under the car that will burn. However, once a good fire starts, materials like the carpeting and foam rubber padding create an extremely hot fire that can consume almost everything but the metal.

What usually happens, says Kubler, is that a person will park his car in a deserted spot, soak it with gasoline or some other accelerant, set it on fire, leave in another car and report the burning car as stolen. “Almost invariably — according to the sheriff’s office — if a car is reported at
Kubler looks for the origin of the fire in the most severely burned area.
Furman students produce “fingerprints” of substances frequently used to start fires.

Senior Roberta Given injects a gas extracted from fire debris into a gas chromatograph.

all, it will be reported as stolen at about the time the fire department gets a report of a burning car.’”

Although circumstances may point to arson, says Kubler, it is hard to prove that a car was not stolen. It is also much harder to establish the cause and origin of a car fire than a house fire. For this reason, Kubler prefers not to investigate car fires, although he has investigated eight cases.

The second stage of Kubler’s investigation takes place in his laboratory, where he encounters different kinds of problems. After collecting samples of debris, he must extract any flammable liquid that may be present from the remnants of carpet, wood and other charred materials. Then he must analyze the substance to determine what it is.

When trying to set fires, Kubler explains, people may use any one of a number of petroleum hydrocarbons — gasoline, kerosene, varsol, diesel fuel, charcoal lighter fuel, etc. — or other substances like ethanol or rubbing alcohol. There are three commonly used methods of getting these volatile accelerants out of fire debris. One involves pouring a solvent into the sample which converts the accelerant to the liquid state. Another involves passing steam through the sample to carry out the accelerant. The third involves heating the sample in an oven to vaporize the accelerant. But all of these methods have serious problems, he says, and nobody is happy with them.

In recent years a chemist at the SLED lab in Columbia devised a new method in which a stream of gas is passed through the heated sample and collected in a tube containing an absorbent. The accelerant is then extracted from the tube with a solvent. This appears to be a better
system, says Kubler, but it has not been evaluated thoroughly against the other methods.

Once the accelerant is isolated from the debris, Kubler injects minute amounts of it, either as a gas or liquid, into a gas chromatograph. In this instrument the substance passes through a little furnace and burns; as it burns it produces ions which cause a recorder to wiggle and register a peak on a chart.

Each hydrocarbon mixture, when inserted in a gas chromatograph, produces its own unique “fingerprint” chart. Some, like gasoline, are complex mixtures of more than 150 different things which burn at different rates and thus produce many peaks of varying heights on their charts. Other accelerants, like ethanol, are relatively simple compounds which produce only one peak.

The problem with this step, says Kubler, is that he seldom gets a whole accelerant to analyze, because the gasoline or kerosene has generally burned to some extent. Thus, a sample of partially burned gasoline may produce a “fingerprint” that looks like a kerosene or varsol “fingerprint” rather than that of pure gasoline. For this reason, it is sometimes difficult to determine exactly which hydrocarbon was used as the accelerant.

Although for legal purposes it is sufficient to prove that an accelerant was present without identifying it specifically, Kubler is not satisfied until he knows exactly which substance was used. Nor is he satisfied with the limited research data available on the methods of extraction.

About a year ago, Kubler began to involve some of his students in a research project which he hopes will eliminate the weaknesses in the analysis process. Under his direction, they are conducting experiments to compare and evaluate the four methods of extraction. They are also producing a series of “fingerprint” charts for each common accelerant at various stages of evaporation so that partially-burned accelerants may be identified more easily in the future.

After Kubler completes the analysis of samples he has collected, he sends a report of his conclusions, along with photographs and a diagram of the house, to the insurance company. With this information, the company decides what action to take next.

Of the 35 cases he has investigated, he has found evidence of the use of accelerants in 14. Yet only one person has been criminally prosecuted as a result of his findings, and that person was tried and acquitted. This is a good example of the difficulty of proving arson, even though there is evidence of the presence of an accelerant, says Kubler.

But insurance companies can use his findings, along with other information, as a basis for refusing to pay claims. If Kubler finds evidence of an accelerant, for instance, the company usually informs the policyholder that it will not pay the full amount of the claim. The policyholder usually protests loudly and hires a lawyer, but eventually — after learning about the evidence — settles out of court for a smaller payment. Sometimes, however, cases do go to court and then Kubler appears as an expert witness.

Although he is paid for his work by insurance companies, Kubler does not accept payment from fire departments or law enforcement agencies for analyzing samples. “I can give them the fast help they need,” he says, “and it’s not much trouble to me. They don’t have budgets for this kind of work, and it’s more important to get the work done than to worry about getting paid. Furman helps support the project and I donate my time. It’s a public service and we’re glad to do it.”

Arson investigators with local law enforcement agencies and fire departments are unanimous in their praise of Kubler. “He’s a super guy,” says Greenville Deputy Fire Marshall Charlie Williams. “He’ll look at a fire with you or for you and run the samples right away, if you need them. And if I need to talk to him, I can call him. He solved a case for me on the telephone just the other day.”

“Without him, we’d be in trouble,” says Don Lee, senior arson investigator with the Greenville County Sheriff’s Department. “He’s the only person or agency we’ve found around here who will analyze samples for us. He gets the results back in a couple of days, while it can take two, three or four months to get a report back from the SLED lab in Columbia.”

Besides providing a much-needed service, Kubler enjoys arson investigation because it gives him an opportunity to perform practical, applied research, in contrast to his usual work. “It’s amusing to me,” he says. “Here I’ve been doing research in chemistry some 30 years and I’ve been tackling what I consider to be fairly important problems. For example, at the first of the year I published a paper with one of our former students on a very esoteric, but basically important subject. It was just an elegant piece of work. We made a nice little contribution here, I thought. There was a lot of interest in it — by about ten people in the world.

“On the other hand, I’m a novice in the business of arson investigation, but everybody wants to talk about it. I can talk about it with anybody any time and they want to hear more. It’s nice to do something, for a change, that other people can understand.”

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Note: the facts in some cases mentioned in this article have been altered since those cases have not been finally resolved.
Writing to sell

by Sandy Jones

"Once upon a time publishers printed a book because it had power and meaning—now books are printed for one reason: they sell."

W riting is a very lonely craft. It demands, as in Zen, the "noninterrupting" attitude of mind acquired in virtual isolation. Words must be captured like butterflies the instant they appear in that inner place where a writer works out sounds and word combinations.

If I were to describe the skill I seem to be applying most directly in my work, it is a brooding concentration. This centering down for writing can be shattered by interruptions so that days may pass before the intensity toward creation can be re-established.

I think this is why the percentage of women writers is so small. While men writers are taken very seriously as they practice their craft, women are seen as simply pursuing a hobby. Obedient wives of the past fed their writer-husbands, brought tea in the afternoon and kept the world at bay for the sake of a higher calling, but realistically, no husband in today's world would play that role.

Women have children. And children make noise. Few women writers have a separate place, an office that is firmly respected as private territory. I have, at least, succeeded in staking out a small room in our three-bedroom apartment, complete with filing cabinets, a typewriter, a desk, bookshelves and the other markings of a professional life, but somehow my pencils always get the erasers chewed off by my gum hungry seven-year-old, and my new box of a dozen Bic pens lasts only a few days.

Students in my nonfiction writing class are certain that the craft of writing is a mysterious secret. Actually, I use the "Dear Harry" approach. Here's how you do it: when you write, picture yourself as writing to an amiable Uncle Harry who welcomes your letters gladly. You can say what you want, but you mustn't put on airs. Simply tell things like they are. Period. (See? You can even break all the rules and make a single word a sentence.)

The process is not as easy as it seems, although the results appear simple. It is a case of wording and rewording, sounding and resounding until a flow is created that is not stilted but smooth-gaited and easy. Sentences must not trip the tongue or be so long that one runs out of breath while reading them. Paragraphs ought to be six to eight sentences at most (preferably shorter) and of a single theme.

For me, writing is a physical process, almost solely based on sound and breath. Husband and child are used to hearing me voicing again and again a sentence until it gels. Hot summers find me stripped down to the bare necessities as I sit on a terry towel intensely working toward a deadline. It's a sweaty way to earn a living.

Besides the ability to tolerate loneliness and the development of the specific craft, there is an important third dimension to becoming a successful writer, and that is the strengthening of the human will.

In a sense, the outer world must be damned. And that takes will. Sometimes the struggle to write has felt to me like a herculean wrestling match where my only weapon is the strength of my will. There have been many days when I have been poised and ready to throw my typewritten sheets with all of their X's and corrections into the trash can as a final gesture of defeat, only to overcome once more in the morning.

It has been very interesting to me to observe students who attend my writing classes. There are those who would like to write. Perhaps they have journalism courses behind them. Perhaps they are the malcontents of the bureaucracy who have a fantasy that writing will pave the path of escape for them. Nearly always there are those who are hurt by life and want a way of crying out. Seldom will any of these people become writers.

Nearly always there is one in the group who is different. She is burning with something that must be told. She's sitting on a story and doesn't know what to do with it. She doesn't know how to get it on paper, but she feels almost an obsession to find some way to say it, to express

*The author uses the female personal pronoun to refer to both genders.

The Furman Magazine
"Of those who have the power to become writers, few will 'make it' in the Madison Avenue mentality of book publishing..."

it. She doesn't care about her English, she's not tripped up by petty grammar rules — she is obsessed by an idea that seems stronger than any of the less important hurdles between her and the expression of herself.

She'll probably make it.

This is where willpower comes in. Writing is a fearsome commitment to something envisioned in the self. It is a decision to take a risk without the assurance of confirmation from the outer world. There is a vast territory of inertia and resistance within the self that must be overcome in order to create this thing outside — this word sculpture. This is the primary battle, not the words themselves.

Every book must have a strong life as a secret thing. It is like the man with six birds in his hat. If he takes the hat off to show anyone, the birds fly away. Over and over I have seen writers-to-be violate that crucial loneliness of the initial creative process by seeking approval from others. Invariably, the building energy within that was needed for the conversion of the idea into an external reality is mitigated by the intrusion of another and the concept dies.

A writer who is going to make it will forge forward, driven by an idea. She will tolerate the crucial loneliness of the initial act of creativity in order to gain the later reward of a finished product pulled together by her strength and integrity, rather than pieced together by the opinions of others.

Can people be taught to become writers? I think there is a powerful anti-creative force imposed by a grading system or by instructors who are not writers themselves but find their power in knowing rules and consuming information. A student who is being forced to prepare for an examination, forced to memorize or regurgitate, is not being allowed the ingathering energy, the loneliness, if you will, to create.

The two crucial elements to leading others to writing are the protection of life space and a nonobtrusive mentor relationship that can confirm for the student that "yes, this is a difficult period that you are going through, but I am sure you can succeed." The giving required is not of information but of the energies of the self. It is costly, but immensely more alive and electric than the typical frozen teacher-student role.

Of those who have the power to become writers, few will "make it" in the Madison Avenue mentality of book publishing these days. Poets and novelists are almost invariably doomed to years of frustration in a world which values things rather than ideas.

I was lucky, I suppose. I never aspired to write The Great American Novel. I simply sensed some years back that writing might be a path for me. I had been a feature editor for the Paladin, writing what look now like flippant, silly things. I got into Furman on my knees by a freakishly high verbal score on my College Boards. My high school counselor predicted I would be a "C" student. She was right.

Yet now I can see that those qualities that make a creative person don't necessarily make a good scholar.

Many writers, like slender Marshall Frady in my religion course, have a streak of rebelliousness. I was told by my first employer that I have "authority problems." My ego prefers to call it a sense of inner direction.

A creative person is consumed by ideas or concepts; she is not happy dealing with objects or the intricacies of assigned tasks. She has an ability to tolerate ambiguity. The writer is characteristically not "a-place-for-everything-and-everything-in-its-place" kind of person. She is not the compulsive student with the straight "A" record.

Most often she will want to follow her own path undisturbed by curriculum guidelines, professors' opinions or the threat of less-than-perfect grades. Finally, the writer-to-be will often have a history of writing, whether it's poems, diaries, angry letters to the editor — the propensity to structure reality into words will show itself somehow.

Knowing that I wanted to write after several years of jobs in social work and psychology that bored me into misery, I approached the editor of an innovative literary magazine. "Marvelous!" she replied to my expressed interest in writing. "What novels are your favorites?" I was set back. I don't read novels. I never have. Set free in the library I would always choose books that gave me information — books on sculpture, books on science or religion — but never a novel.

Finally, Betty Hill Folts, then editor of the Charlotte Magazine, suggested that I try writing a piece for her. I did, and it was never published, but she suggested that I seek a copywriter's position in order to practice the craft. Soon I worked my way out of the China department of Belk's in Charlotte and up into the advertising department where for $1.85 an hour I typed ads selling tennis shoes and Karastan rugs. Under the supervision of a skillful copywriter I overcame college-eze and learned how to write like I talked.

Later, after a master's degree in psychology, I became director of public information for a mental health association in Baltimore. Suddenly, I was like a fish swimming in water. People would ask me to write things, and I did with ease and speed. This was for me.

At that point I was a writer with nothing to write, but soon afterward, I stopped work to have a baby. Suddenly, in the middle of the night, when the baby was less than a year old, the concept of a book came to me. It would be like a Whole Earth Catalogue with product reviews for parents. I hastily scribbled down notes about it before the
idea left me. (I've since learned that one must revere that sacred flow of ideas whenever it comes — whether it's in the car at a stoplight or at 2:00 in the morning.)

The result, Good Things for Babies, came after all of the inner uncertainties and the probability of tormenting failure had been fought, one after another. I now know that all writers-to-be must go through that process of fighting with their own inner negations. Often the more powerful the negations, the more exquisite the product that comes much further down the road.

After a few rejection slips, I was fortunate in tapping into an editor who shared my enthusiasm for my idea. I pictured her as a mature woman in a pin-stripped suit with a hefty, girdled body. She turned out to be younger than I with flowing, curly red hair, granny glasses, blue jeans and a raccoon coat.

I had six weeks to write the manuscript. And this during Christmas while my husband, my baby and I travelled to my home in Atlanta and his home in Kannapolis. It was awful. Suddenly I was confronted with having bitten off more than I could chew. Yet somehow, by the grace of God, and a small portable electric typewriter, the book was done and sent off to the editor with much trepidation on my part.

Following an interview by Barbara Walters on the "Today Show," her book sold 1,000 copies a week for three weeks.

A year later Good Things for Babies emerged, complete with a tour for the scraggly housewife-mother that I had become over the past two years. Among other programs in six cities including Boston and Chicago, I was booked for the "Today Show." Finally after three weeks of delays, I found myself checked into a tiny room at the Algonquin Hotel with my alarm set for 5:30 a.m. in order to arrive at the NBC studios down the street at 6:00 sharp.

The studios were remarkably small and weather-beaten with scuffed walls and candy wrappers on the floor. We were to wait in a tiny room with a TV monitor, called everywhere the "green room," where nervous guests await their entrances. I was greeted by the writer, a tall, nervous man in his forties named Mel, and a strange little woman in tennis shoes and mismatched clothing who was the art director.

Shortly before show time, Barbara Walters arrived. She settled herself at her position on the small, carpeted platform behind the news desk where she was to open the show. Her voice, sharp and commanding, would ring out, "Mel!" and Mel with a look of apprehension would go running to her. She didn't like the script. The public wouldn't go for this line. Get on the phone and check this statement out. A hard-driving perfectionist, she recorded a voice-over for a tape five times until it was exactly as she wanted it.

My five minute segment was to be taped directly after the program for airing later. Meanwhile, I watched Walters demolish a Harvard political scientist, who came back into the green room his face paled to the point of yellowing and his trembling hands clutching a cigarette and coffee. "She's tough, Fred, you know she's tough," reassured Mel.

After an hour of building inner tension, my turn comes. Walters proffers a limp hand. Can we take a picture? Well she's in a hurry so make it fast. The interview is completely read from a teleprompter except for a brief excursion when she tries to convince me that paper diapers are better than cloth. In what seems like a minute and a half the interview is over, and I wearily head to the airport for the securities of home.

Following the "Today Show" segment, the book sold 1,000 copies a week for about three weeks — testimony to the power of that tiny studio and the handful of people who operate it. I received a typewritten copy of my "Today Show" testimony with a careful refutation from the paper industry that paper diapers are better. Big brother was watching.

Since that time have come Learning for Little Kids, several magazine articles, two hefty folders of book reviews, a 200-page typewritten manuscript without my name on it which I sold for 15¢ a word to somebody else to use under an organizational name, and TV and radio

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appearances in every major city in America.

Now I'm big time, I suppose. My agent reminds me that I am an "established author" as we talk today about a book proposal that will be simultaneously farmed out to five large publishers. Notice came yesterday that I have been selected for The International Authors and Writers Who's Who, "found in 3,000 of the world's leading libraries," the form letter says.

As far as I can tell, I'm still the same person I always was although I'll probably get a premature dowager's hump from my endless days of typing page after page of words. The difference between now and when I first began writing is that now I understand, I think, the money orientation of publishers.

When I teach writing to students, much of what I teach them is how to market themselves and their manuscripts. I'm sure that once upon a time publishers printed a book because it had power and meaning — now books are printed for one central reason: they sell.

The shrewd writer learns how to image for the publisher that the book will be financially successful, how to talk in terms of numbers of buyers and demographics of potential sales. Books are not sold by manuscript but by a cunning kind of bridge game in which the writer leads with the strongest suit in an attempt to flush out the publisher's advance monies without having written more than a table of contents and a chapter or two.

Interestingly, the intense reward for the writer is not when the book is published but during the quest for a publisher. This is when the creative juices flow, when one feels the excitement of the hunt. The manuscript itself, after months of labor, becomes a boa constrictor that slithers back again and again to choke and almost kill, until the author in a last gasp of desperation throws it out to the world, never wanting to see it again. A year to a year-and-a-half later the book returns, not looking at all like one expected but like something dreamed far in one's past. The grief process of losing one's pet image is long since passed, and so I meekly put the book on the shelf as a relic, with only an occasional glance in a bookstore to see if, in fact, the book is still there.

Although people assume that writers are wealthy, only a tiny handful have vaulted to that position, while the rest of us must content ourselves with a meager check in the mail every six months. It is either feast or famine — either I have thousands of dollars at my disposal, or I have none. The emotional and financial ups-and-downs lead to a strange fantasy that perhaps the world was right after all — mankind was meant to be in fluorescent-lit offices, taking a 30 minute lunch break and coming home at 5:15. After all, it would mean a nice little check in the pocket every two weeks that could be applied to a mortgage payment.

But then, there are always the intangibles . . . the sense that I had a hand in changing the way that Americans view themselves and their children . . . being on the scene as the axis of baby care shifted from authoritarian physicians back into the waiting hands of deeply caring parents.

There are moments when the clouds clear away and I see myself as an initiator in my place and time. The inner battles of creating are silent. I see that the wars of the will are necessary. If for only an instant, there is an affirmation deep within myself that what I am doing has value and that I am not alone.

I probably will always write.

Sandy Jones, a 1965 Furman graduate, is the author of Good Things for Babies and Learning for Little Kids, published by Houghton Mifflin. She has written on child-rearing subjects for a number of national magazines, including Family Circle, Parents' Magazine and American Baby. She lives with her husband, Dr. Paul Jones, and their daughter, Marcie, in Baltimore, Maryland.
Imagine this, if you can. It is the early sixties, the first heady days of the New Frontier, and you are going off to college. Because you come from a small South Carolina mill town, you arrive both ignorant and provincial, and you sense it. Walking into that Williamsburg brick dorm in your Wranglers and penny loafers, you're frightened, unsure of your abilities, but also frankly hungry for the big world beyond home.

Your first weeks confirm some of your worst fears and best hopes: yes, you are inept and self-conscious and even more ignorant than you knew, but you are also — it seems — worth the effort of good teaching. In your courses in literature, religion and history you're required to do what seems an enormous amount of work, but you are paid the compliment of being expected to be able to do it, too. So you try, and begin to like it. Best of all, there are some teachers who take the trouble to show you that you don't have to continue to swallow the radical prejudice, the religious intolerance and the political reaction which were — outside a small circle — your common fare. Slowly but surely you begin to get an education.

I don't have to imagine this romantic little story; I can remember it. The year was 1961, the mill town was Woodruff, the teachers were Bob Crapps, John Crabtree and Al Reid, and the college was, of course, Furman. I tell you this, and remind myself of it, because the best way to try to think sensibly about our responsibility to the future is first to acknowledge the past and try to take its measure. In that past can sometimes be found a reason for a particular future, a specific choice among all the alternatives which now confront us.

As any friend of the university must already know, we have recently embarked on the Campaign for Furman's Future, the effort to raise
$30 million for the university in the next few years. Now, $30 million is not an overwhelming amount of money in these inflationary days, but neither is it a negligible sum to request from the friends of a small liberal arts college in the Southeast. Why should Furman need such an amount of money? And, more important, why should we support this campaign right now, when money is tight, when prices keep spiraling upward and when many worthy causes request our help?

I must declare an interest at the outset. I am not an impartial observer of Furman University. I speak as one who fell in love with the place early on and who these days more than ever believes that Furman is a rare college, a place where thinking and caring combine in remarkable ways to produce educated women and men, a place which must continue to flourish. If I cannot pretend to be neutral, neither can I claim to possess any esoteric insight into the questions I have raised. As you will see, I can only say what I believe about the campaign; I can only tell you why I am committed to a certain sort of future for the university. And my reasons for this commitment are not especially surprising. Indeed, that is my excuse for sharing them here: perhaps we need now to be reminded of just how obvious are the grounds for our support of the university. As we all know, or learn to our pain, it is not only the complex and difficult truths which we forget or neglect; sometimes we fail to honor what is dearest to us and closest to hand.

Why does Furman need $30 million? Without trying to list all the ways the money will be used, I can think of three immediate needs. First — and to my mind foremost — we need a great deal of scholarship money so Furman can continue to attract a diverse and academically superior student body. No one needs to be told that a college education, like everything else, is becoming increasingly expensive. When I came as a student in 1961, total costs for a boarding student were $1,400 per year; when I graduated they were still just $1,600. Now the Furman boarding student pays about $5,500. While Furman works very hard to control costs and thus is still a genuine bargain compared to other colleges of similar quality, it is not hard to see that we more and more face the danger of losing to richer schools gifted students unable to pay our price. This is bad for them, and bad for the university. They lose the chance to get that distinctive Furman education, and the university loses the chance to be enriched by their particular talents and perspectives. As the competition for students grows keener and keener — and it will — Furman simply must have much more scholarship aid at its disposal.

If we do not, we will begin to lose the first of those elements that make us a first-rate college: a student body which is bright, creative, responsible and diverse. The salt of these capable and energetic minds gives savor to the whole community; without it our university, and much else besides, will become flat and tasteless.

A second need is the completion of the campus, including the refurbishing of buildings now beginning to show their limitations. Furman has, of course, a strikingly beautiful campus, well planned and well maintained; but even so it is not everything it could be or should be. To serve the increasingly various and creative interests of our students, we badly need, for example, the visual arts building. Improvements to Watkins Student Center have already begun, and others are sorely needed in the residence halls.

The campus must be made more responsive to changing instructional techniques and technologies. Furman Hall, the first classroom building on the campus and still the place where most classes meet, is in need of some major alterations. Since it was built, for instance, audiovisual and computer-assisted instruction have grown tremendously in sophistication and importance; yet Furman Hall is in many ways unsuited to those technologies. To make it a modern classroom building, one suitable for the decades to come, will demand substantial renovation.

Other necessary improvements are planned as well. One that is especially exciting to me is the Humanities Commons Room proposed for Furman Hall. In this spacious, pleasant room students and faculty will meet in an informal setting to continue over coffee or cider those discussions that begin in class and stretch beyond the fifty-minute hour.

A third need, and one not likely to be so immediately obvious to friends outside the university, is what we might call academic development. Without a well-qualified and energetic faculty, a superior student body and a splendid campus would be largely wasted. Education demands teaching, and a superb education demands superb teaching. Furman has a remarkable faculty, women and men who work hard and well at their teaching and their research. As their student, and now as their colleague, I have good reason to know their excellence as scholars and as human beings. The challenge before us is to let that excellence continue to flourish. As the numerical growth of the faculty slows in coming years, we will need to find new ways to keep departments vital and enthusiastic. As knowledge continues to increase, we must help faculty members stay in touch with their disciplines and to remain productive scholars. As instructional techniques change, we will need to make Furman’s teachers as sophisticated and well equipped as any to be found.

These are tall orders, to be sure, but

"Furman simply must have much more scholarship aid at its disposal."
they are essential to the well-being of the university. To meet them we need substantial funds to underwrite sabbatical leaves, endowed professorships and lectureships, departmental visitor programs, curriculum development, teaching improvement and the like. Without such support we cannot guarantee that the vitality and quality of our academic program — that is, of our university — can be maintained.

These are only three of Furman’s needs: scholarships, bricks and mortar and academic development. Much more could be said about any one of them, or about countless others. But these three paint a very simple moral, and thus give a very simple answer to our first question. Why does the university need the $30 million sought in this campaign? Because without it Furman cannot remain Furman. It cannot flourish as a first-rate liberal arts college, one with a superior student body, a superb faculty and a campus second to none.

But why should I support Furman in its aspirations to continued excellence? My first reason for support derives from a general and deep conviction about the worth of education, a conviction that is connected to an even deeper conviction about the intrinsic worth of truth itself. Pretentious as it sounds to say, we here in the Greek and Christian West seek the truth: the truth in itself, for itself; all the truth — the truth of body, brain and soul. We believe (though “believe” seems too weak a word) that truth is always better than error, that the partial view is always to be replaced with a fuller understanding, that the bondage of falsehood and illusion is perhaps our common state but not our destiny. Of course, we cannot argue such large convictions; any argument would beg the question at issue. But our lives — yours and mine — rest upon these convictions.

Because education is just the transmission and discovery of truth, aimed at the discovery and transmission of even more truth, education seems to me to be eminently worth doing for its own sake. Peter Herbst puts it thus: “The education of a student is an end in itself, and the making of him is our noblest work.” Now, because Furman University is an educational institution, in deed as well as in word, to ally myself with Furman in its defining work is to ally myself with that which honors the truth as such. It is to do something worth doing for its own sake.

But such reasons only justify the support of education; they do not require a commitment to Furman alone among all the institutions which honor the truth as such. But for most of us, or for someone we love, Furman is not just an institution; it is alma mater. It nurtured us when we were young; along with family, church and nation, it gave us what we have. That debt to the university cannot be repaid, any more than one could repay one’s family or friends. And just as our parents don’t ask for repayment, but only that we be what they best dreamt for us, so too does the university ask only our support for the future, not recompense for the past.

I can never forget those days in 1961 when I was a freshman at Furman. Nor do I wish to. Freshmen still show up here each fall, just as we did 20 years ago. Today they wear top-siders and Izod alligator shirts, and some of them have already been to Europe or seen the Golden Gate. But they are still ignorant, provincial and hungry for the truth.

For Furman University to continue to sustain them — and give them what they need — it must have the aid of those it nurtured in the past. The Campaign for Furman’s Future aims to provide nourishing intellectual fare for new generations of students. How can we, who have feasted here, fail to set a full table for the future?
The many hats of Hazel Harris

by Marguerite Hays

As administrator, teacher, friend and parent, Dr. Harris gives of herself in an extraordinary way.

As Hazel Harris walks into her office at 8:45 in the morning, the telephone is ringing and there are five or six messages on her desk. While she talks on the phone, a young woman, a graduate student who has a nine o'clock appointment, arrives early and waits in the outer office.

As soon as Dr. Harris hangs up, her secretary comes to the door to say, "The wasps have come down from the attic in the Child Development Center again. I've called someone to try to get them out." Also, she says, Dr. Clanton wants to talk to her a few minutes about a possible summer session course. In the next ten minutes, Dr. Harris talks with Dr. Clanton and returns two telephone calls, laughing and joking with each person she talks to.

The rest of Hazel Harris' day is like the beginning. As director of graduate studies, director of summer session, director of the Child Development Center and a member of the education faculty at Furman, she scarcely has a moment to herself.

On this particular day in late fall she talks with the graduate student more than an hour to work out her schedule. Next she spends 30 minutes with her assistant who is preparing information for next year's summer session catalogue. At 11:15 she meets with a prospective student to discuss Furman's graduate program in education. From 12:00 to 1:00 she and Dr. Bing Somers, chairman of the education department with whom she teaches a methods course, plan the midterm exam they will give later in the week. The methods class meets from 1:00 to 3:00 and Dr. Harris stays after class to talk with several students. At 4:00 she meets again with Dr. Somers and another education professor to plan some graduate courses for winter term.

At 5:30 she goes to the dining hall for a dinner meeting with other faculty members. Just before the meeting ends at 8:30, she sneaks out to go to the Child Development Center (now free of wasps) for an orientation meeting for parents of new students. Although this meeting ends at 9:30, she stays to fold up the chairs and clean up so the center will be ready to open at 7:30 the next morning. She leaves the campus about eleven o'clock.

While Dr. Harris does not stay at Furman this late every night, she often stays later, and she refuses to estimate how many hours she spends at Furman each week, saying, "I've never even thought about it." Usually, she says, she leaves her office about 7:00 to drive home and fix dinner for her family: husband Gary, who also teaches education at Furman; son Gary, Jr., 16, and daughter Lindsey, 11. But during rush periods, she admits, she frequently calls home to ask Gary or the children to heat up meals she has prepared in advance so she can stay at Furman until twelve or one or two o'clock.

"So many different things happen during the day and I have so many interruptions," she says. "It's not until everyone leaves that I can think for a long period of time about the things I really need to concentrate on. Mostly these are things I can't just give ten minutes' attention to."

Hazel Harris has probably never given "ten minutes' attention" to anything she has done in her life. Whatever she does — whether it's planning a program, writing a speech or cleaning house — she does it with all her heart, soul and might, no matter if she sleeps at all.

That's probably why she is director of summer session. When she was asked to take over summer session in 1974, summer enrollment had started to decline at Furman, as well as nationwide. Because of changes in Furman's curriculum which made courses longer and more expensive, some students who might have attended Furman in summer began going to other institutions where courses were cheaper and the work was not as hard. Through sheer willpower and determination she has turned this trend around so that 785 students attended Furman last summer compared to 536 in 1977.

By using her imagination, she has enticed teachers back to Furman. She has done this — with the help of the education department, she emphasizes — by experimenting with new courses that meet teachers'
special needs and by arranging these courses so that they can take a vacation any time they want to. For instance, in 1974 she thought of setting up an elementary teachers workshop which would consist of five one-week segments, with a new topic beginning each week. Within this format, she reasoned, teachers could take any combination of three weeks for three hours credit or all five weeks for six hours credit. Offered for the first time that year, this workshop has proved to be the single most popular summer session course, attracting as many as 65 teachers a week from all over the state.

She has introduced other innovations, including workshops of varying lengths, giving varying amounts of credit, which start throughout the summer. Some workshops and courses are taught by Furman faculty members; others bring well-known visiting professors and consultants to the campus. For next summer she is planning an institute on teaching gifted and talented students, which she hopes will attract students from all over the country.

Not only does she organize the summer session program, but she also promotes it, which in itself could be a full-time job. With the help of the university relations office, she and her staff prepare the annual summer catalogue for undergraduates, graduates and teachers; advertise in the local news media; distribute posters on campus and in the community; and send out special mailings to undergraduates, teachers, which she hopes will attract students from all over the country.

No matter how successful any program may be, Dr. Harris never feels she can relax and repeat it exactly the next year, because — she believes — people are always looking for something different. "Generally, I don't think people any longer make decisions based on quality. I think you've got to have something else that attracts them, something in a little different format or some really big issue for them to focus on. Although we still offer a quality program, I don't think we can depend on that alone to attract students."

Long before summer session is over, Dr. Harris must turn at least part of her attention to the fall graduate program. As director of graduate studies, she plans the curriculum, arranges for faculty members to teach the courses, publicizes the program, and advises all graduate students. At last count, some 1,700 students were in various stages of graduate work in education at Furman.

As if this were not enough, she is also director of the Child Development Center, a program she started and has tended with care. In 1974, as chairman of a committee to study the status of women at Furman and as a mother who needed a place to leave her children, she decided to suggest the opening of a child care center on campus as an experiment. The Furman administration agreed to the idea and renovated an old house at the back of the campus for that purpose. Graduate students, faculty and people in the community enrolled their children that summer, and the center has operated by popular demand ever since.

In winter the center accepts 32 children, ages three to five, and employs three professional staff members and a student helper. In summer it becomes the Summer Children's Company for 52 children, ages three to ten, with five full-time staff members.

When the center first opened, Dr. Harris spent more time there than she does now. "I even did the janitorial work, because we didn't have a budget for it," she says. "I went over on weekends and vacuumed and cleaned the bathrooms — the things I do best." She laughs.

Now there is an adequate budget for cleaning and other necessary services, and one staff member serves as head teacher. However, Dr. Harris still hires the staffs and oversees all administrative matters, including bookkeeping and billing.

As a member of the education faculty, she teaches a course in the fall and usually supervises student teachers in winter term. For three years, however, she has been given release time in winter to serve on the steering committee of a project to strengthen new faculty teaching, supported by the Lilly Endowment. In this capacity, she has helped organize and present seminars and workshops and she serves as an in-house consultant to new faculty members.

"Without a doubt, this has been the single best experience I've had at Furman, as far as growing professionally," she says. "I've had to do a lot of reading in preparation for these seminars. I think any time you do something for your colleagues — your peers — you really want to be up for it."

Although many of her duties now are administrative, Dr. Harris' first love is teaching. "I've wanted to teach as long as I can remember," she says. "When I was a little girl, I had a school in my backyard. All the neighborhood children who were younger than I knew how to read when they went to school, because I taught them."

Students at Furman often describe her as a "master teacher." A few complain that she demands too much of them. "She doesn't demand nearly as much of them as she does of herself," says Dr. Somers. "She'll sit down and work with them hours and hours. If they turn in an assignment that's not what it ought to be, she'll have them do it over again. It's just a constant attempt on her part to pull out of them what she thinks is there."

In spite of all her professional activities, Hazel Harris is known as an immaculate housekeeper, an excellent cook and a devoted parent. She describes herself as a very "family-oriented" person who tries to be as good a wife and mother as her own mother was.
When does she clean house? "Gary says constantly. He says he's sure the rug is going to have a hole where I've vacuumed it so much. I guess that's my way of working off frustrations."

Sometimes in the morning, she says, she sets the alarm for five o'clock so she can get up and put a load of clothes in the washing machine and go back to bed. Occasionally, she also mops the kitchen at five.

She tries to do a lot of cooking on weekends, so some dishes can just be heated during the week. In summer she cans and freezes vegetables and makes jelly because, she says, 'I want my children to say, 'That was something my mother did,' or 'I enjoyed eating my mother's peach jelly.'"

When the children were younger and she had to go out of town on business, she would prepare and label all meals in advance. She would also label the clothes they should wear together each day. "It wasn't that they couldn't do it," she says, "but I didn't think they ought to have to do that sort of thing."

"Hazel has a strong sense of responsibility for taking care of things at home," says her husband. "She is also something of a perfectionist. She likes things to be just so and it shows up in everything from her house to her work to her hobbies. I don't really know anything she does that she doesn't do well."

Doing everything well can be exhausting, even for Dr. Harris. Sometimes, she admits, after an especially hard day she collapses on the den floor, too tired to get upstairs to bed. But a few hours' sleep usually restores her vigor.

The Harrises have taught at Furman since 1969. North Carolina natives, both have doctorates in education; his is from the University of North Carolina and hers is from Duke University. They met while she was an assistant director of the M.A.T. program at Duke and he was an assistant principal of an elementary school. "Of course, I felt I should get to know the administrators in the school where our interns were, so I married one," she jokes.

After marrying, they lived in Durham a year and then moved to Chapel Hill when he was offered a teaching position at U.N.C. In 1966 they moved to Spartanburg, where he taught at Converse College and she was curriculum coordinator at Spartanburg High School. When they first came to Furman, Lindsey was a baby and Hazel taught only part-time.

Besides having the same professional interests, the Harrises both enjoy the out-of-doors and physical activities. Gary is a long distance runner. Hazel lifts weights in Furman's weight room three days a week and walks several miles on alternate days. Within the past year or two they have taken up bicycle riding and now take weekend cycling trips.

For their annual family vacation last summer the four Harrises drove to Bridgewater Corners, Vermont, where they began a seven-day, 260-mile bicycle tour of the state. Riding 35 to 50 miles on back roads during the day, they spent the nights in country inns.
"There's no way to describe the peace you feel as you're riding through the countryside," says Hazel Harris.}

"For me it was the perfect vacation," says Hazel. "I just can't go to the beach and bask in the sun. I want to keep moving. There's no way to describe the peace you feel as you're riding through the countryside."

At home Hazel Harris seldom has time for any sort of entertainment, including television. "I'm ignorant as far as TV goes," she says. "That's sometimes a source of embarrassment, when I can't talk about anything you see on TV."

Friends describe Dr. Harris as a very caring person, who often finds time to bake a cake or write a note of appreciation to someone. Also, they say, she has a sense of humor which most hard-driving people lack. "I've known other people who worked as hard as she does," says Dr. Somers, "but they don't have the saving grace or charm or sense of humor that makes her so special."

As both her friend and chairman of the education department, Dr. Somers says his main problem in working with Dr. Harris is refraining from asking her to do too much. "You're tempted to give her every assignment you can think of because you know she'll do it and do it right. But if you do, you end up contributing to a workload that would be unacceptable to 95 percent of the people around here. I think it's partly the responsibility of people who are in a position to ask her to do things to pull back and say there ought to be a limit somewhere."

"One is tempted to describe Hazel as almost sacrificial," says Academic Dean John Crabtree. "She gives of her time and energy in an extraordinary way. She runs the risk, I think, of giving too much."

But Hazel Harris enjoys her life and her work. "I find my work satisfying and rewarding. I'm the kind of person who responds well to success. A little pat on the back will keep me going for weeks."

Pressure does not bother her, she says. "I think I work well under pressure. I've even found myself arranging my time so it would be a pressure situation."

One time, she says half joking, someone said something to her about being compulsive. "I said I didn't realize I was compulsive. Compulsive to me is a negative thing. I'd rather say that I'm committed. Once I take on a project, I'm committed to sticking with it. I don't take on something and just get lukewarm."

She does worry that some people might think of her as a "superwoman," something she says she is not. If Gary were not willing to take a good bit of responsibility for the children, she says, like picking them up after school, taking them places and spending some time with them at night, she could not do the things she does.

"I think he realizes what keeps me going. He knows I like to work and that's just part of my makeup. He knows I have to be busy and if things begin to get boring, I'll create another program."

Right: Judy Parler, 1980 Homecoming Queen, escorted by her father, J.W. Parler of Lexington, South Carolina.