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Then: Reflection on the Importance of Furman as it was

Alice Dean Pugh '60

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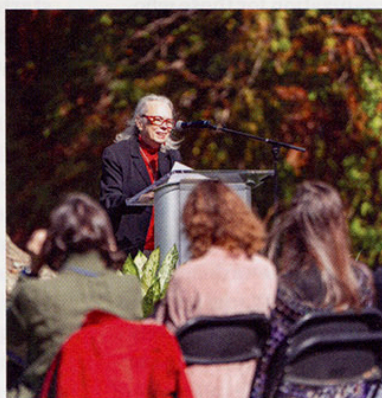
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Upper left: Furman University President Elizabeth Davis and Shelby Parker '15, the university's first known Cherokee student, unveil the plaque.



Right: Helen Lee Turner, the Reuben B. Pitts Professor of Religion, speaks to the audience.

spark the creation of the Native American Indigenous Student Association. The university will add a course on the Cherokee to the curriculum next year, and there's potential, and hope, for the creation of a minor in Native American studies in the future.

But, Turner said, land acknowledgments also "recognize the unique and enduring relationships that exist between Indigenous people and their traditional territories and commemorate the fact that they have not and cannot be erased. The Eastern Band of the Cherokee people are here. They are making a mark and demonstrate to all of us the power of resilience."

Cherokee storyteller Kathi Littlejohn told a legend of a man swallowed by a fish who became bald after being in the beast's belly. She delighted in the presence of abundant animals gathered nearby. Squirrels chased each other around the trunk of a nearby tree, Furman's black swans paddled along the bank, a skein of ducks took flight and the crows squawked and cawed overhead.

"I think the crows are saying, 'This is a great event. Everybody come and look and see what they're doing,'" Littlejohn said. "When the animals join in, it's a good event." ♦

THEN



ALICE DEAN PUGH '60

When I entered the Woman's College of Furman University

68 years ago, I had no clue what a long shadow that would cast. The joys of that connection have lasted and sustained me in my life's journey. The friends who I made at Furman are bonuses that I have learned to treasure.

The in-town location allowed me to walk downtown to shop at Ivey's and Myers Arnold. A yellow school bus was my transportation to classes or Furman Singers' practice on the men's campus. When I was a senior, I needed a car to drive to Greenville High School where I did my practice teaching.

The evening meal at the Woman's College was served family style. The girls on work scholarship served the circular tables of eight people. As we waited for the dining room doors to open, we sang, "Here we are like birds in the wilderness waiting to be fed." During Sunday lunch we had a seated meal instead of cafeteria style. After lunch we would go to the Chinese Parlor for after-dinner coffee. The hot tea and coffee were served

from a silver service. On Sunday evening, we picked up a sack supper that we ate in our rooms.

Before I realized that most Furman Singers were voice or music majors, I auditioned to join the Singers. Again, my luck prevailed; I made the cut. The secular and sacred music I learned taught me much more than I learned in the required music appreciation class. During spring Break, Furman Singers traveled by bus around South Carolina performing in Baptist churches and public schools.

After three delightful years living at "The Zoo" (nickname for the Woman's College), I decided to live on the New Campus my senior year. When I came back for reunions, I wanted a connection to the new location of Furman University. ♦

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Alice Dean Pugh '60 is a retired teacher from DeKalb County Schools in Georgia. She majored in English at Furman and still lives in the Atlanta area.