

## FURMAN UNIVERSITY MOVES ITS CAMPUS

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The end of World War II brought sudden, far-reaching changes to Furman University which made it apparent that the purchasing of government surplus buildings and the remodeling of the older structures could only temporarily take care of the need for more adequate facilities. Even before the war some planning for new construction had been done. The will of Dr. Sydney Ernest Bradshaw, longtime professor of Modern Languages, left in 1938 to the university a sum of \$100,000 to be used for a new library building. Preliminary sketches had been prepared for the proposed building and some additional funds were raised for use as soon as the end of the war made the resumption of college construction feasible.

Meanwhile, plans were discussed for the erection of five new buildings and some extensive remodeling and expansion of existing structures, which in 1943 was estimated would require an outlay of \$1,175,000. The trustees had even gone so far as to employ J. E. Sirrine and Co., Greenville engineering firm, to make a survey to prepare plans for the future development of the campus.<sup>1</sup> At the same time a policy was adopted of buying real estate adjacent to the campus as the opportunity might arise. A month before the end of the war an issue of the *Furman Bulletin* was released containing pictures of the drawings of the proposed new buildings to be erected with the \$2,000,000 which it was anticipated would be raised in a three-year campaign to be inaugurated as soon as the war ended. However, these plans proved premature and a number of people became convinced that a move to a completely new site was the best answer to the problem of Furman's future growth.

Behind the decision to move there were a number of new developments: the Service Men's Readjustment Act of 1944 brought so many new students that the buildings were strained beyond capacity; the arrival of the automobile on the ratio of almost one per student made the parking problem insoluble; the avalanche of paper work for the administration meant that for a time the

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<sup>1</sup>"Minutes of Furman University Trustees, Executive Committee," February 1, 1944. (Hereinafter cited as "Minutes, Executive Committee")

personnel of the administration grew at a more rapid rate than either students or faculty.

A report to the Board of Trustees in May, 1948, listed other reasons which led to the final decision to seek a new location where all operations of the university could be consolidated: a cost of at least \$30,000 per year for the maintaining of duplicate facilities on the two campuses; the fact that the Woman's College campus was so near the center of the city that additional development would not be wise; that the men's campus was not large enough to provide space for the necessary buildings and that it would cost at least \$750,000 to purchase the additional twenty-five acres to provide for current needs, allowing no room for later expansion; and that a projected four lane highway through the men's campus would actually divide the property into two portions.<sup>2</sup> Additional arguments presented for the move were summed up as: it would provide for adequate expansion in the future; it would provide for a location away from the noise, smog and distractions of the city and would be more conducive to the academic life; and finally, a proposed new campus might become so exciting as to inspire large new gifts to the university.

The decision to move made, early in 1949 the Furman University Board of Trustees began a careful study of matters dealing with the future development of the school. Dr. J. Dean Crain became chairman of the site committee and was perhaps most influential in the decision to seek a new location where all students could be brought together on one campus. After a year of study during which more than twenty possible sites were considered, the university purchased 973 acres on the Poinsett Highway for the sum of \$542,531.00. One interesting feature of this area was that it contained some of the headwaters of the Reedy River which "laved the feet" of the old campus, in the Alma Mater at least.<sup>3</sup>

Late in 1951 committees composed of faculty and students began to consider plans for building on the new campus, so that their suggestions could be presented to the architects. Some months later a contract was signed with Perry, Shaw and Hepburn, Kehoe and Dean of Boston, Massachusetts, to draw up the plans for the new

<sup>2</sup>"Minutes of Furman University Trustees," May 11, 1948. (Hereinafter cited as "Minutes")

<sup>3</sup>"Minutes," August 22, 1950.

campus.<sup>4</sup> This firm designed in 1953 the master plan which has been followed with some minor modifications since that time. Upon their recommendation R. K. Webel of New York was retained as the landscape architect.<sup>5</sup>

To facilitate solicitation of funds, it was decided to go ahead as soon as possible with the construction of two major buildings, even though the most optimistic hopes placed September, 1956, as the earliest date the campus could be occupied. Estimates of the ultimate cost of the project had been revised upward within two years from the originally announced \$7,000,000 to \$8,500,000.<sup>6</sup> Actually, the first contract for a building on the new campus was let at \$30,000 to the Daniel Construction Co. of Greenville for the construction of a nursery and greenhouse on five acres of land fronting on Duncan Chapel Road.<sup>7</sup>

In the middle of an old corn field on October 8, 1953, the symbolic ground breaking ceremony was held, with the eighty-six year old Alester G. Furman, great grandson of the founder and himself a former trustee who had served for fifty years, turning the first shovel. Dr. Charles F. Sims, Executive Secretary of the South Carolina Baptist Convention, speaking for the 410,000 Baptists of the state, heralded the occasion as pointing "to greater things for Furman, greater benefits and opportunities to students." Dr. John Laney Plyler, President of the university, commented "We build not for personal glory but for the youth of present and future generations" and announced that he had just received an anonymous donation of \$150,000 for the building fund. This brought the amount of money represented by cash and pledges for construction of the new campus to about \$5,000,000.<sup>8</sup>

Supporting the efforts of the trustees and officials of the school in the new undertaking was the South Carolina Baptist Convention. In order to inform the ministers of the state of the aid the convention was giving the school, Alester G. Furman, Jr., Chairman of the Furman Trustees, sent to them a letter shortly before meeting of the 1956 convention in which he traced the events leading up

<sup>4</sup>"Minutes, Executive Committee," July 29, 1952.

<sup>5</sup>"Minutes," April 14, 1953.

<sup>6</sup>*Greenville News*, April 15, 1953.

<sup>7</sup>*Furman University Hornet*, September 25, 1953. (Hereinafter cited as "Hornet")

<sup>8</sup>*Furman University Bulletin*, September-October, 1953.

to the new campus. Included in the letter were these two paragraphs:

When plans were completed, the whole program was submitted to the General Board of the State Convention of the Baptist Denomination in South Carolina. Upon receiving their approval it was then submitted to the entire South Carolina State Convention and unanimously adopted. This program included the purchasing of an entire new campus site, the planning of new buildings, and provision for financing and the activation of the program. The Convention authorized, empowered and directed the duly constituted officers of the said convention: "to cooperate in every way with the Board of Trustees of Furman University and its properly constituted officers in pledging the good faith and credit of the Baptist Denomination in South Carolina by executing notes or other written instruments to the end that the principles, purposes and terms of this resolution be made effective and to do any and all other necessary acts to the end that the building and enlargement program of Furman University may become a reality at the earliest possible moment."

Work began in earnest in January, 1954, on the 200-acre area which was to become the center of the new campus, when Sloan Construction Company started moving the first of the 400,000 cubic yards of dirt in a grading operation which took about six months. The most interesting feature was the construction of a dam to impound a lake covering about twenty-five acres, which was stocked in the fall with bass and bream. Two small streams and a number of springs furnished an ample supply of water to maintain the desired levels in the lake even during the dry season of the summer. Scheduled originally as an irrigation source was a smaller lake near the greenhouse, but many people later were finding this to be one of the most dreaded hazards on the golf course. With the completion of the greenhouse in February, the wholesale propagation of plants began so as to be ready to landscape other portions of the campus at a later date.<sup>9</sup> In addition, many friends of Furman donated trees and shrubs to the University.

Contracts amounting to \$1,500,000 for the construction of the first two major buildings were let in October, 1954, to the Daniel Construction Company. One of these was for a two-story classroom building to provide space for thirty-two classrooms, lounges, and

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<sup>9</sup>*Hornet*, February 5, 1954.

faculty offices; the other for a dormitory to house one hundred six men.<sup>10</sup>

The increase in enrollment for the 1955-1956 session necessitated using these new buildings for the first time in that year. One hundred freshmen with six upperclassmen as counselors lived in the new dormitory and made use of some classrooms and the dining facilities, in what was planned to be the Home Economics laboratory area of the classroom building. For a year then, the university was operating three separate campuses.

When these "pioneers" appeared in September, they found some two miles of hard-surfaced road, two buildings nearly completed, work under way on the baseball grandstand and other athletic playing fields. A third major building was started that fall to serve as the administration building. At a cost estimated at \$340,000 this structure was located at the north end of the classroom building and harmonized with it in appearance. In addition to the offices for the various administrative functions, it contained the main telephone switchboard and various mailing and supply facilities.<sup>11</sup>

The year 1956 saw the completion of tennis courts, part of the golf course and the baseball field. Work was started on the library building which was planned to be the central feature of the campus. All the while landscaping and grading was being carried on by the Furman grounds personnel who had planted some 1400 trees on the campus, many more on the golf course while literally thousands of shrubs had been set out.<sup>12</sup>

The trustees held their first meeting in their board room in the new administration building in April, 1957, at which time they awarded contracts for the construction of three additional dormitories for men at a cost of \$1,235,370 and a dining hall to cost \$983,350. The dormitories were similar to the one already in use, and would form with it a quadrangle. The dining hall would contain a main dining area which looked out upon the lake and would seat 800 and two smaller rooms with a capacity of 100 each.

Next on the construction schedule was the center section of the science hall. This would provide room for the necessary science

<sup>10</sup>Furman University Magazine, October, 1954. (Hereinafter cited as "Magazine")

<sup>11</sup>Magazine, August, 1955.

<sup>12</sup>"Minutes," April, 28, 1956.

classes initially with the long range plan calling for two additional wings to be added to make the structure comparable in size to the classroom building.

The architects paid an interesting tribute to the master mason, who died after having supervised the work on the first four new buildings, by installing on the terrace of the library a plaque reading:

In memory of Elford S. Wyatt, master mason from  
whose skill and devotion came the beauty of the walls  
of this university.<sup>13</sup>

The bricks used for all structures were made in Virginia to resemble those used in colonial Williamsburg. They were larger to size and showed a wider variation in color than most ordinary brick.

The booming economy of the United States in the post World War II period was accompanied by a sharp increase in prices, resulting in continued increase of the overall cost of the new campus. As of March, 1958 some \$6,725,000 had been spent on the new campus. In addition to the buildings themselves, this represented about \$1,000,000 for grading, landscaping and paving and about \$100,000 on athletic fields, and architects' fees.<sup>14</sup>

With such rapid progress being made, it was now possible to make definite plans to move from the men's campus so that September, 1958, would see the first full use of the new facilities. Thirteen faculty committees were set up in January to make definite plans with Francis W. Bonner, Dean of the Men's College, taking charge of the overall operation. Everyone could see that many things would not be finished, or delivered, or prepared by September first, so the opening of school was delayed for one week to provide that much additional time to make final adjustments. Various expedients were necessary and some University operations had to be installed in space which was designed for something else. For example, in the basement of the library were grouped a lounge for day students, a music studio, a classroom for the Speech and Dramatics Department, the supply room and armory of the R.O.T.C., and offices for the student publications.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup>*Magazine*, October, 1957.

<sup>14</sup>*Hornet*, April 25, 1958.

<sup>15</sup>"Minutes of the Furman University Faculty," May 12, 1958.

Moving traditions to a new campus was not easy, but naming the buildings helped maintain continuity and also relieved the awkwardness and hand waving as people tried to give directions to those who could not remember which was dormitory A, and which was B or C. Officially the four dormitories were named for former presidents; Charles Manly, 1881-97; Edwin McNeill Postat, 1903-18; William J. McClothlin, 1919-33; and Geer Hall which honored jointly Bennette E. Geer, president 1933-38, and John M. Geer, former trustee and a longtime friend of the university, for whom a men's dormitory had been named on the old campus. The classroom building was officially named the James C. Furman Building to honor the memory of the first president of the university who was also a son of the founder.<sup>18</sup>

The committee choosing names for buildings also decided to honor Dean Robert Norman Daniel, teacher of English, 1911-58 (except for 1914-20) and Dean, 1922-1948, and Dr. Marshall Delph Earle, Professor of Mathematics, 1890-1934, by naming for them the two lounges in the men's dormitories. It was also announced that former President Andrew Philip Montague, and professors Charles H. Judson, Hiden Toy Cox, O. O. Fletcher, and H. T. Cook would be honored by having their names given to some feature of the new campus.

The alumni meeting as part of the 1958 commencement was notable for two things. First, it was the first meeting of alumni at the University's new home with picnic luncheon served under the arcade alongside the classroom building. Afterwards twenty class groups met in various classrooms for reunion sessions. The second novel event concerned disinterment by the graduating class of 1908 at Greenville Woman's College of a small marble box which they had buried at the foot of a tree planted by them on the Woman's Campus. As a highlight of their fiftieth reunion this box was unearthed from the base of the tree, now a large wateroak four feet in diameter. The class president, Mrs. R. N. Daniel, the former Evelyn Pack, removed from the box copies of the class will, prophecy, class oration, history, poem and the *Isaqueena Literary Magazine* for 1908. The seven members of the thirty-six of the class present for the reunion later in the day reburied their class memen-

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<sup>18</sup>"Minutes," Apr 15, 1958.

tos under a tree which Mrs. Daniel planted near the baseball grandstand on the new campus.<sup>17</sup>

Early in the summer ground was broken for the construction of a twenty-four unit garden-type apartment project on Duncan Chapel Road to provide housing for married students. The apartments were named Montague Village to honor the memory of Dr. Andrew Montague, President of the University, 1897-1902.

For the move of equipment from the men's campus some seven miles to the new site, Dr. Francis W. Bonner did the necessary organizing. Dr. Albert Sanders, Professor of History, who had had some knowledge with trucking operations during his army years, headed a group of students, janitors and other workers who used a fleet of three old trucks belonging to the university to haul books from the library, office files and equipment, some furniture, and innumerable boxes and miscellaneous items through Greenville streets and out to the proper building on the new campus. This group moved everything except pianos and heavy safes which had to be handled by professional movers. Even the "Old College," a small white frame structure on University Ridge which had been the first home of Furman in Greenville, was moved to a site overlooking the lake on the new campus.

Other buildings on the old campus did not fare so well. North Hall, West Hall, Griffith Hall, the temporary wooden annex to the library, and the wooden buildings used by the R.O.T.C. were sold or razed to remove fire hazards. The eastern side of the Men's campus was changed drastically as the new four lane Church Street was cut through between the main campus and Sirmine Stadium, which was the only part of the old property which the university would continue to use. The remaining buildings were locked up. As was to be expected, property which is not occupied begins to deteriorate as weather and vandals have their way. People who had grown to love the old campus could not ride through without a touch of sadness at the sight of gaping holes in windows and weeds growing over places which had been *alma mater* to students for over a century.

The 132nd year for Furman men opened at the fifth campus to be used by the school (six, if one counts separately the Women's campus on College Street in Greenville). Nine years had trans-

<sup>17</sup>*Magazine*, June, 1958.



formed the old corn fields and rough patches of woods to a spacious campus with nine major buildings; a lake complete with canoes, sailboats, swimmers, fish and ducks; paved streets, parking lots, and the bustling activity of college grounds alongside a new four lane highway. In many ways it resembled a small town with its own police and fire protection, sanitary and maintenance facilities, and a fleet of service vehicles.

Perhaps the new campus served as a drawing card for new students. At any rate, when classes opened in the fall, there were 71 girls in Manly Hall on the new campus, 250 at the Woman's College, and so many men that 70 double deck beds were installed to put three boys in that many rooms. With the athletic building and science halls not yet finished and some equipment not yet delivered, the first days of the school year were somewhat confusing. In a sense there were no "old students" familiar with where things were and how things were done, so that everyone had to experience a sort of orientation period.

But people were happy to find conveniences which had not existed heretofore at Furman: an official United States Post Office in the classroom building, a laundry room with coin-operated washers and driers in each dormitory, many additional vending machines and a more satisfactory arrangement for a barber shop. Within a few weeks some capitalistically minded students began peddling sandwiches at night and delivering newspapers in the early hours of the morning. The Greenville City Coach Company provided an hourly bus service to town in addition to the busses operated by the university to transport students between the Women's College and the new campus, for there was still that commuting problem for some classes and for the meetings of the many student organizations which involved students of both campuses. Fortunately, the old yellow school busses which had done yeoman service since 1946 were replaced with three diesel-powered "road-busses" which were more comfortable and could make the trip more quickly. There were some people, however, who remembered with mingled nostalgia, regret, and relief the wild careening rides down Main Street in those overcrowded yellow busses driven by men who had once piloted fighter planes and who never forgot the exhilaration of speed.

Before Christmas the work on the athletic building was finally completed. Coaches, the trainer and the athletic publicity director

moved into their offices. However, the building was overcrowded from the beginning with all indoor physical education classes for both men and women, all intercollegiate athletic teams, the intramural athletic leagues, and students working out as individuals making use of the one structure. Sometimes the impression was given of a three-ring circus in one ring. Especially was this true during the winter weather with the court area in great demand by several groups for basketball.

Finally, too, the science hall portion was completed. No longer did students mingle in the halls with electricians and painters, and classes met without competition from hammering and drilling. The physics classroom was named for Dr. Hiden Toy Cox, Furman graduate of 1903, Dean 1913-1922, and Professor of Physics 1906 to his death in 1937. Under his inspiration many Furman men went on to achieve outstanding success in areas related to physics. By any standards he was a master teacher and one of the few of its own faculty members whom Furman has recognized by conferring an honorary degree.

Alumni who returned for the homecoming exercises of 1959 witnessed two attempts to move part of the tradition from the former campuses to the new location. On the men's campus a central feature had been the "Block F," a large concrete letter "F" which had served as a meeting place, bench and footrest for innumerable bull sessions at the main street intersection near the library. Since the original could not be moved intact, a replica was built by the baseball grandstand. The marble plaque indicating that the original was a gift of the class of 1928 was set into the new "Block F" in a variation of a cornerstone laying ceremony.

Also from the old campus came the Doughboy, the bronze statue of a World War I infantry soldier, which had stood in the circle behind the library. Both statue and pedestal were somewhat the worse for wear since they had often been a target for the paint dispensed by raiders from other campuses. Sand blasting took care of the paint, at least until after the ceremony, but even in his new place at the foot of the lake the Doughboy blossomed out in a coat of light blue paint before many months had passed. Presumably Citadel supporters had wanted to help keep their part of Furman tradition alive and functioning on the new campus as well.

The auditorium was the major construction project for 1959. In the spring work got under way on the building which was named for Mr. William H. McAlister whose daughter's estate made a major grant toward the \$1,500,000 cost of the building. Work on the building was hampered by springs uncovered in the course of excavation and the architects found it necessary to redesign the foundation to give it a water-proof construction.<sup>18</sup> An unusual feature of the auditorium is the baroque Holtkamp organ installed with its pipes exposed surrounding the console. Many people, accustomed to the romantic organs in church buildings, thought this organ was unfinished with some of the pipes cantilevered over the edge of the balcony.

Ground was broken in January, 1960, for the construction of dormitories for women. The very soft earth which lay under the foundations of these buildings necessitated the driving of over 600 piles, an operation which gave the Tuesday Afternoon Sidewalk Superintendents Society, an amateur group of faculty members, quite a project that spring. The five dormitories were connected to form a complex shaped like a shallow letter "U", with a beautiful garden in the open court facing the lake. The four stories were surmounted by a cupola which gave the name *Under The Cupola* to the handbook for women students. A large replica of the seal of the Greenville Woman's College was mounted over the main entrance and a few people began referring to the structure by the term "The Zoo" which had long been the name for the Woman's College in the downtown location. However, this attempt to move a name was doomed to fail. Apparently traditions "like Topsy jest grow" and cannot be artificially cultivated or grafted at a new location. As yet these buildings are still referred to prosaically as the Women's Residence Halls.

The housing situation continued to be a problem, especially for the men, since Manly Hall was still being used for senior women and a few juniors. The experiment of having men and women living in adjoining dormitories separated only by the Earle Lounge which was used by both sexes was handled with no difficulty. Forty-eight men were sent to live in twelve of the two-bedroom apartments of Montague Village. One of the bus drivers was included in the number in order to provide some additional transportation for them to the main campus area. These men enjoyed kitchen privileges

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<sup>18</sup>"Minutes of the Faculty of Furman University," September 5, 1959.

and a living room but they took their meals in the dining hall and paid the same boarding fees as the other men.<sup>19</sup>

The graduating class of 1960 collected money to leave as their gift to the school a small replica of the bell tower of old Main Building to be erected near the lake to serve as a place to hang the original victory bell. There was some discussion after a year when the project had not been started, but gradually sentiment started building up to either move the bell tower itself, or to build a replica on the peninsula at the upper part of the lake. No action was taken on this until 1964 when an anonymous donor provided the money, the architects donated their services without charge, and The Daniel Construction Company agreed to do the actual work at cost. Work began in the summer on a full-sized replica of reinforced concrete. By the end of the year it was learned that in addition to the old bell a carillon of sixty-four bells was being cast in Holland to be hung in the new tower. The Old College building was utilized to house the keyboard apparatus which provided one of several ways by which the bells could be rung. A new clapper was cast for the old Furman bell which would permit it to ring out Furman athletic victories with its accustomed tone. The familiar silhouette of the tower added a welcome touch of the old and once again the tower appeared as the Furman symbol on class rings, stationery and other items used by the University.

Work on the women's dormitories moved toward completion in the late fall of 1960 and the *Hornet* carried a story which began with "Having begun in 1954, construction is now approaching the halfway mark on the new \$30,000,000 campus. . . ." Early in 1961 the new dormitories were given names to honor the memory of several persons who had been prominent in the earlier history of the two schools. Judson Hall was named for Charles Hallett Judson and Mary C. Judson. He had been a member of Furman's first faculty in Greenville in 1852, served for forty years as Treasurer, was Dean of the Faculty and acting President before his death in 1907. He had donated \$25,000 to Furman and the chapel on the old campus was called by his name. Mary, his sister, was named Lady Principal of the Greenville Female College in 1874 and served in various capacities there for forty-six years.

Ramsay Hall honored Dr. David M. Ramsay, President of the Greenville Woman's College, 1911-1930, and for fifteen years presi-

<sup>19</sup>*Hornet*, October 10, 1958.

during those critical and decisive years in the story of Furman University when he said:

As I look around this imposing edifice I feel that someone said:

Let there be spaciousness that our minds may be turned to wide horizons;

Let there be beauty of lines with warm and soft colouring, that we may feel the thrill of loveliness;

Let there be melody, that our ears may be attuned to celestial harmony;

And prior to all these, that someone said,

Let God be glorified . . .<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>Program for the Dedication of McAlister Auditorium, April 17, 1962