

Lives in Danger

A movement was started back in the winter to improve the fire conditions in the buildings on the campus, and, while some improvements have been made, they must be speeded up for the sake of the lives and the buildings involved.

The action began when the Macon Fire Department made a survey of the situation and decided that something should be done immediately. Mercer officials sent a letter to their insurance company stating that the university planned to take steps immediately.

It did. It bought a few fire extinguishers, a few crude signs to stick on the walls pointing to the fire escapes, and the like. But that does not constitute any major improvements.

The fire department suggested that sprinklers be installed in non-fire restrictive buildings. There is no evidence of them. The department was quoted as saying that "the safety of your pupils and buildings, as well as the reduced insurance costs, would more than repay the outlay for sprinklers."

Residents of the upper floors of Roberts Hall are at the mercy of a rope suspended from the rafters as a means of escape in case of fire. It is doubtful that the rope would be adequate for the men housed there, and fire licking out the windows would burn it instantly.

Men at Shorter Hall have even less protection—none, to be exact. Not a fire extinguisher is present in the building, and no means of escape is provided on the outside. They would be at the mercy of fate should an emergency arise. Jumping from windows is not generally advisable.

Even the edifices that have outside escapes are not safe. The administration building has only two such structures, and they could not begin to carry the load of students in case of fire during classes. Willingham Chapel is in the same condition.

Life is a very real thing, and to have it whisked away because of a lack of necessities is a shame. Money is also important, but it does not compare with life. For that matter, buildings would be hard to replace—much harder than a small amount taken from a fund.

Like the fire department said, "The reduction of insurance rates would more than repay the outlay."

Another Champion

The Mercer baseball squad is due congratulations. It is not often that a team which was so downtrodden early in the season recovers in time to win a championship, but that is what the Bears have done.

At one time, they had suffered eight straight defeats, but they did an about face to finish the season with the crown jauntily perched atop their black caps. It takes a great deal of intestinal fortitude to stand up in the face of that much adversity.

The school, students, and public may have been too harsh and too quick to judge. After all, they did all that was expected of them in their own league. They are not of the caliber of some of the subsidized athletes they play, but nobody should expect them to be.

When you are champs in your own league, it does not make much difference what you do outside it.

The Mercer Cluster

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The Mercer Cluster is the official newspaper of Mercer University, published by the students weekly from September through May, except holidays and examination periods. Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office at Macon, Georgia, April 6, 1948, under the Act of March 3, 1879.



Seab Miller

I Sit Before a Picture

I sit before a picture of someone I like very much. This is a true representation of their image at the instant in time which it was snapped. It is not so now.

But then this thought occurs to me. Is this likeness before me really the person I know? Is this person, whose bland smile I now see, the same behind this work? There is a severity in her bearing, there is tranquillity in her composure.

I am not at all sure that she was as unperturbed as she seemed to be. Or, if she were, she may not be now.

One is not today what he was yesterday. In the light of new hope an individual can be more balanced, jovial, and affable. Life can take on new meaning and purpose with the solving of one of the little puzzles which nature throws across the path.

As each new day dawns there is a new creature where the old one was. The ideas of yesterday are the pageants of today and the relics of tomorrow. These changes are

not as rapid in some as in others. One of literature's most notable characters, Hamlet, expresses this thought when he states, "I have of late lost all my mirth . . ."

This image, upon which my eye lingers, still is changeless. The representation is static, the woman is dynamic, moving, changing. The attitudes and emotions of that time now are passing. Perhaps they will soon disappear.

The sculptured image stares into the air. Another day is here. "The bird of time has but a little way to flutter, and the bird is on the wing." Omar had a different idea of what to do while the bird was in flight, but he showed that time never wears the same face twice.

I look again before me. Maybe this new creature will be more dear to me than was the other.

Julian LeRoy

Athletic Rumors Spiked

Rumors have been flying around the campus lately concerning the athletic and several of the varsity sports.

Such rumors went along the line, "I hear that Mercer is not going to have a baseball team next year," or "Is it really true that varsity track is being cut out next season?"

After hearing many repercussions of these I thought that the situation was serious enough to be investigated.

Upon talking with Mr. Zeb Vance, head of the Mercer athletic department, I found out that these rumors were false and had no justification.

Vance affirmed that the athletic department has no intention whatsoever of eliminating any varsity sport next year or any time in the near future.

He also stated that only in the case of some extreme situation such as if enrollment were reduced in half, would any such measures even be considered. No such situation is being anticipated, and it is very likely that the enrollment next year will be an increase over this year.

Vance added that schedules for

most of the sports, basketball, track, and tennis, are already in the process of being completed. The other schedules are also being drawn up.

Coach Nylmiec has reported that already four contracts have been signed for next year in track and possibly two more will be added.

I think that such considerations, in the light of the budget going into the hole this past year, reports very favorably of the athletic department.

As a whole, Mercer exhibits a high caliber of athletic teams in relation to other schools of its class and size and many times with those schools in a much larger enrollment.

We, as students have something in our athletic teams and coaches to be proud of and they deserve our full support.

On the Campus

Women put their best foot forward on some previously all-male campuses last week, and apparently they are there to stay.

At Georgia Tech the board of regents made the school co-educational by a seven to five vote. The vote followed a bitter debate in which one regent declared, "Here's where the women get their

roses under the tent."

And another regent snorted, "We'll have home economics and dressmaking at Tech." The regent chairman also spoke against the change: "Maybe I'm an old Fogey, but I'm afraid the moment we get women on the campus they'll be coming in and saying we got future mothers on our hands and we ought to prepare them for it."

Reg Murphy

Of Mudholes and Ties

What ever happened to that time honored Mercer custom of placing a flag in a tree, letting the sophomores protect it, and forcing the freshmen to attempt to capture it? It used to be great fun during the ratting season, and we would like to see it installed again.

There were several humorous circumstances surrounding the situation. One of them was that the freshmen, if they could not get the flag, had to parade downtown, stopping at Tatnall Square and other points of interest to wade through mud puddles and small lakes. Another demanded that they wear green ties if they were not able to remove the sophomore colors.

Sophs Get Smart

The sophs employed tactics which they deemed necessary to prevent an uprising of the lowly rats. They placed the largest of their number just under the tree, prepared to shake out any small rodent which happened to break through the cordon of guards. He usually didn't have too much business, but when he did, it was furious activity.

Many times the frosh borrowed the skill of a couple of baggage handlers, only using the smallest of their number for baggage. One of the husky ones would grasp the little one's arms, and the other his legs. They never had time to go through the customary three swings, but they got him into the tree anyway. If he had ape-like instincts, then the freshmen were excused from the trip to town and the iridescent ties.

Toes In Mud

One doesn't find it difficult to conjure a picture of a youth testing the mud with his toes as he enters the water. Nor is it hard to imagine the green ties clashing with his other clothing of the day. But the contusions and abrasions must have presented their own color scheming.

Once, in the space of sixteen years, the freshmen were victorious only twice. The other fourteen, it must have been mighty hot. Ties and collars can become a drudgery, especially when the tie is persistently green.

The folks who are about to graduate to the soph ranks might give the matter of revival of the sport serious thought. Freshmen might color up the brown of autumn with blue spots, red clay shoes, and aqua chokers.

Judson Moss

Gone But Not Forgotten

Present-day Mercer students know him only by a small, obscure marker in Sherwood parking lot, but Lee Battle holds a special place in the hearts of thousands of Mercerians whom he served for 40 years on this campus.

He held the title of janitor in Sherwood Hall. But this man was much more than that. He was also unofficial "trainer" of the football team and accompanied the team on trips to meet Army, Yale and other Eastern powerhouses.



LEE BATTLE

It has been said of this humble Christian man that he never forgot any student's name, nor room number, and was a special friend and counselor of entering freshmen. He made many loans to students and boasted that he had never lost a penny. He, in turn, got the money from faculty members on the pretext of paying his insurance policy.

Battle was a familiar sight on campus, and was always to be seen wearing his apron and carrying an old broom. As a tribute to him, the Mercer alumni made him an honorary member and bestowed on him the "honorary" Ph.D. degree.

When their friend lay sick in a local hospital scores of Mercer students offered their blood. When he died, at the age of 74, his body lay in state in Chapel and President Dowell, Dr. Louis D. Newton, Harry Smith, and others officiated at the rites held in Forsyth where he was born shortly after Appomattox in 1865. Members of Blue Key served as active pall bearers.

The Cluster published a special "Lee Battle" edition shortly after his death on Dec. 8, 1938, with a picture and poem as tribute to him.

Though never privileged to know him, we can but re-echo the words inscribed in his honor: "His life was a blessing to all who knew him."