

Compiled by Clara Fountain and Susan Huckstep

- 1854: William Isaac Berryman opened the Danville Female Institute in his home on Patton Street to house twenty boarding students for two five-month sessions.
- 1858: The Danville Female Institute closed due to management problems with boarding costs.
- 1858: Nathan Penick moved to Danville from Halifax County, Virginia, and opened the Baptist Female Seminary, using Berryman's home for classes. Penick was married to Jane Averett who taught music, French and English. She was the first of eight members of the Averett family to be affiliated with the Baptist school.
- 1858: Joseph James Averett and his wife, Rosa Celeste, came from Halifax County to join the college faculty.
- 1859: The school's name was changed to Union Female College, derived from the three local Baptist associations that backed it financially: Dan River, Concord, and Roanoke.
- 1859: The school was incorporated by the General Assembly of Virginia in 1859, and the first charter was written.
- 1859: John Taylor Averett served on the college's first Board of Trustees.
- 1860: A new brick building housing Union Female College was constructed atop "Baptist Hill" at Ridge and Patton Streets in Danville, next door to Berryman's home. The structure was built at a cost of \$25,000.
- 1861: William Allen Tyree replaced Penick and served as the first principal during the war years. Tyree was a brother-in-law of Penick.
- 1863: When Tyree left, John Cralle Long stepped in for five months as principal of the school.
- 1863: Isaac Beverly Lake shared the leadership of the college with co-principals during the remainder of the war, and during the immediate post-war years.
- 1864: Having the word "union" in the college name during the war years proved an embarrassment to the community. The college's name was changed to Roanoke Female College (or, R.F.C.) after the largest of the three Baptist associations.
[The *Danville Daily* newspaper claimed that the name was changed in 1863.]
- 1866: Hannon W. Reinhart served as a co-principal for one year.
- 1867: Thomas Hume, Jr., joined R.F.C. as co-principal from 1867 to 1872. Under the leadership of Lake and Hume, the school enrolled 91 students for 1868.

- 1870: R.F.C. hired a third co-principal, Arnaud Eduard Preat who had come to Danville one year earlier to teach at the Methodist college.
- 1872: John Taylor Averett became principal of Danville's first public school system.
- 1872: After Hume resigned, John Lipscomb Johnson and Samuel Wootton Averett joined the faculty as co-principals with Preat.
- 1873: R.F.C. co-principal Preat was killed prior to commencement when a keg of beer exploded in his face.
- 1873: After Preat's death, John Taylor Averett and his younger brother, Samuel Wootton Averett became co-principals. Three areas of study were offered: preparatory, collegiate and ornamental.
- 1884: It was John Taylor Averett who imposed the rule for students to wear uniforms to avoid rivalry in dress.
- 1885: Frederick Delius served on the music faculty for the year 1885-1886. Soon afterwards, Delius returned to England to become one of that nation's foremost composers.
- 1887: Samuel Wootton Averett left to become president of Judson College in Alabama.
- 1887: John Taylor Averett was the first person to be named President of the college.
- 1889: John Taylor Averett suffered a stroke, and spent his final three years as president partially paralyzed and in a wheelchair.
- 1892: The Lyrian Literary Society began the school's first library collection.
- 1892: John Taylor Averett retired.
- 1892: Charles Fenton James replaced John Taylor Averett as president.
- 1893: Students established the Philomathean Literary Society, and its members were known as Philos.
- 1898: John Taylor Averett died.
- 1898: Charles Fenton James added a wing to the Patton Street building that included the school's first indoor plumbing.
- 1900: A tradition of "Hiding the Crook" began around 1900. The practice was abandoned in the early 1960s because somehow the crook disappeared. [In 1999 the crook was discovered in the college vault and placed in the college archives.]

- 1903: Robert Edwin Hatton assumed the presidency after the death of Charles Fenton James on December 3, 1902. James was so loved by students that a marble commemorative plaque was commissioned in his honor. Today it can be found just to the right of the lobby in Main Hall.
- 1903: Robert Edwin Hatton added teacher training, economics and business to the curriculum and increased the library's holdings to 2,500 volumes. He also added a tennis court, a basketball court, baseball grounds, and formed the first glee club.
- 1904: The College's first yearbook, *Echoes of R.F.C.* [later, *Echoes*], was published.
- 1907: Robert Edwin Hatton resigned as president; John Bruce Brewer succeeded him.
- 1907: Students established the Mnemosynean Literary Society, whose members were known as the Nemos.
- 1908: A fifteen-acre tract on West Main Street was purchased from the Mountain View Land Company for \$5,500 for the purpose of moving the campus away from the crowded downtown business area.
- 1908: The Averett College Alumnae Association was founded.
- 1910: The College name was changed to Roanoke Institute when President Brewer managed to win an affiliation with the Baptist General Association of Virginia for additional funding.
- 1910: Main Hall (on West Main Street) was constructed at a cost of \$40,670.
- 1911: At Easter the student body of R.I. moved from Patton Street into their new quarters on West Main.
- 1914: The college was reorganized and all degrees above Associate level were dropped. The college remained a junior college until 1970-71.
- 1914: President John Bruce Brewer retired. He was succeeded by William Walter Rivers.
- 1917: College Alumnae petitioned the Trustees to rename the college for members of the Averett family. In June, 1917, the name Averett College was officially adopted.
- 1917: President William Walter Rivers resigned to pursue a career in business; he gave the college a bust of Minerva to hang in the auditorium.
- 1917: Clayton Edward Crosland replaced Rivers as president.
- 1920: The Averett Student Government Association was organized.

- 1921: President Crosland was forced to resign in 1921 after allowing young women to dance with one another during their afternoon recreation period.
- 1921: Clayton Edward Crosland was replaced by James Pressley Craft. President Craft, thinking he heard prowlers in the college's kitchen, fired his pistol into the dark room only to find students raiding the icebox.
- 1922: Averett discontinued its primary school.
- 1922: The first issue of *The Chanticleer*, Averett student newspaper, was published. *The Chanticleer* ceased publication in 1930 but resumed in 1934. The newspaper was named after the rooster Chauntecleer in Chaucer's "Nun's Priest Tale": *Chanter*, in French, means to sing and *cler* means "clear."
- 1923: The yearbook's name was changed to *Pendulum*, from the grandfather clock in the lobby. The *Pendulum* suspended publication in 1990.
- 1923: The Annex, behind Main Hall, was built at a cost of \$60,000 and included 24 residence hall rooms, a swimming pool and a gymnasium.
- 1923: The honor system was implemented.
- 1924: A young history teacher named Mary Catharine Fugate joined the faculty.
- 1924: An Averett student defined an oyster as "a fish built like a nut." Concerned with students' lack of scientific knowledge, President James Pressley Craft added a separate science department and hired a full-time librarian.
- 1926: The annual May Day Festival began, a tradition that continued until 1969.
- 1927: The college's first full-time librarian was hired, Avis Marshall.
- 1927: James Pressley Craft left Averett to assume the presidency of Hardin College in Missouri.
- 1927: John Walter Cammack succeeded him.
- 1928: President Cammack raised \$100,000 to construct a music and science building. The building was named Danville Hall in honor of the city whose citizens gave more than \$440,000 for its construction. The four-story building housed the departments of chemistry, biology, business, home economics and music.
- 1928: The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) responded to these changes by granting full accreditation to the college.
- 1928: A local dentist and Trustee, Dr. T. L. Sydnor, donated funds to construct an athletic field.

- 1928: The Lingerhook, a log cabin, was built on the Sydnor Athletic Field where students could go to be alone, or to have parties.
- 1930: The Daisy Chain had already become an old custom during commencement.
- 1930: A home for the president was built at 174 Mt. View Avenue. The office of Institutional Advancement moved in when later another home was acquired for the president. The first house has also been called North Hall and Alumni Hall.
- 1936: President John Walter Cammack resigned.
- 1936: Curtis Vance Bishop became the ninth president of Averett College, counting from John Taylor Averett.
- 1937: Averett discontinued its secondary school.
- 1938: Renovations were made to the president's home on Mt. View Avenue.
- 1943: Averett students sold \$15,000 in war bonds to purchase parachutes for the war effort.
- 1943: Averett students of the 1940's hummed the popular songs of the era, "I'll Be Seeing You," "Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree," and dressed in their best attire for the Wednesday evening candlelight dinners.
- 1945: The Annex was enlarged and its name changed to Davenport Hall, in honor of former Averett Trustee Charles L. Davenport.
- 1946: Twenty-five veterans enrolled as day students under the G. I. Bill of Rights. By 1947, forty men were enrolled. The veterans formed a fraternity, Gamma Phi Nu, and wrote columns "Those Versatile Vets" and "Male Call" for *The Chanticleer*.
- 1952: Five Averett students removed bones and a skull from a grave. They carried the bones to the Averett day students' room to hold a séance. After complaints from fellow students, the perpetrators burned the bones in the college furnace. President Bishop suspended one of the students and expelled the other four. The incident garnered national media attention.
- 1953: The senior class presented the college with its first television set. The RCA Victor set with a 21-inch screen was placed in "The Spot," Averett's student lounge. Popular television shows were "I Love Lucy," "Father Knows Best" and "Dragnet."
- 1956: A new Gymnasium was built on Mt. View Avenue. On Sept. 29 the first dance held in the new gym included students from the University of North Carolina, at Chapel Hill.
- 1956: Davenport Hall extension II was completed.

- 1959: Averett College celebrated its 100th birthday. Alumni from throughout the United States came for the occasion. Sixty-three colleges and universities sent representatives.
- 1959: Pritchett Auditorium was named for a local doctor, Dr. C. W. Pritchett. Built on the top of the new gymnasium, it was dedicated Nov. 15, 1959 during the college's weeklong Centennial Celebration.
- 1959: Danville Hall's extension was built.
- 1960: Broadway veteran Mimi Kelly was the first concert booked in Pritchett Auditorium.
- 1963: Civil Rights demonstrations were held in Danville; 130 students cancelled their plans to attend Averett.
- 1964: Bishop Hall was completed which connected Danville Hall, Davenport Hall and the gymnasium/auditorium complex. President Curtis Vance Bishop assured parents that their daughters would not be exposed to either elements or urban turmoil from September when they entered Averett to May when they left.
- 1965: A three-story administrative wing and a two-story dormitory wing were added to Main Hall.
- 1966: Curtis Vance Bishop died in 1966. President Bishop left to his successor a college over two-and-one-half times larger in square footage than the college he inherited.
- 1966: At Bishop's death, Mary Catharine Fugate, Dean of the College, was selected to serve as Acting President from January to September.
- 1966: In September 1966, Conwell Axel Anderson assumed the presidency.
- 1966: The *Ember*, Averett's student literary magazine, began publication.
- 1966: In August, the college purchased the house and property at 344 West Main Street, which the Catholic Church had used for their Sacred Heart Parochial School from 1953 to 1966. The old Walter W. Waddill house became the Fine Arts Building for Averett and its old Carriage House, constructed in 1869, became the pottery classroom.
- 1966: The college held its first Parents' Day, which gave parents the opportunity to talk with instructors and administrators.
- 1967: The Board of Trustees made the decision for the junior college to move to a 4-year program. They reinstated baccalaureate degrees and coeducation, giving President Conwell Axel Anderson two years to strengthen the faculty and build a library.
- 1967: The Trustees created a Board of Associates, comprised of professional and business leaders, to assist the administration with current and future programs.

- 1967: The first development office was formed to coordinate fund raising, public relations, and alumni affairs.
- 1968: President Conwell Axel Anderson appointed a Ministerial Advisory Committee to act as interpreter of the college to the Baptists in regard to the receipt of federal aid.
- 1968: Under President Anderson students were finally allowed to keep cars on campus. A 200-car parking lot was constructed at the corner of Surry Lane and Woodland Drive.
- 1969: Averett's first African-American students enrolled as day students.
- 1969: Mary Catharine Fugate retired after serving 45 years as Dean and Registrar.
- 1969: The May Day Festival and Daisy Chain traditions came to an end. The last May Day festival was dedicated to Dean Mary C. Fugate.
- 1970: The first Libra Day was held in October, a tradition more appropriate to a coed college.
- 1970s: The first issue of the *Averett Journal* was published in the spring. The Averett faculty created this publication where they could publish articles about their own specialties and learn about each other's talents.
- 1970: The Mary C. Fugate Hall was constructed, offering residence to 150 students in fifteen air-conditioned suites.
- 1970: The Board of Trustees voted to make dormitory space available for male students. Wholly unprepared for the arrival of men in Averett residence halls, the college housed the first male resident students in Hotel Danville where they picked up all sorts of "bad habits." When they were finally housed on Second Main it became the responsibility of Dean of Students Mary Jo Davis to help them adjust to life at Averett.
- 1970: When the decision was made to tear down the old Fine Arts building and to construct a new library on that lot, a private home next door (built in 1890) was acquired from the Ayres estate for use as the newer Fine Arts building.
- 1971: SACS accredited Averett as a senior college.
- 1971: The first bachelor's degrees were conferred since 1914.
- 1971: For the first time in the college history, men were awarded bachelor degrees at graduation.
- 1971: Mary B. Blount Library was constructed. On Sept. 14, 1971, students and faculty moved 34,000 books from the library in the basement of Bishop Hall to the new Blount Library at 344 West Main Street. After the move a picnic was held on the athletic field.

- 1971: The first issue of the alumni magazine, *Potpourri*, was published.
- 1971: Replacing The Spot, the Bottom Inn, located in the basement of Bishop Hall, offered food services and a place for students to relax. A haven for students from academic life, the Bottom Inn was a place for grabbing a quick lunch, listening to contemporary music, or playing a game of ping-pong, pool or Foosball.
- 1971: Attendance at chapel was changed from mandatory to voluntary.
- 1971: The first Miss Averett pageant was held, a preliminary contest for the Miss Virginia/Miss USA pageant. Julia McLaney won the title of the first Miss Averett.
- 1972: Averett established its first Evening College by offering classes at night for patrons who were unable to attend during the day, especially for community college graduates who wished to earn B. S. degrees in business management, law enforcement or education.
- 1972: The first Averett College men's basketball team, coached by Gary Bannister, played a full schedule of games.
- 1972: A Reading Center was established at 335 Townes Street to provide specialized training for Averett education majors and to offer a service to the community.
- 1973: The Virginia Beta Chapter of Alpha Chi National Honor Society was chartered at Averett. Chapter sponsors were Pauline Coll, Marilyn Russell and John Dever.
- 1973: In February, Averett's African-American students planned an annual Black Studies Week, featuring special guests and performers.
- 1973: Under the leadership of Dean R. Kirby Godsey, Averett and Stratford colleges developed cooperative programs. Plans called for the colleges to merge.
- 1973: Averett adopted Stratford's 4-1-4-1 calendar, thereby creating January and May terms. The January terms were popular, especially for travel abroad.
- 1973: Averett added a program in horsemanship, leading to a baccalaureate degree.
- 1973: Under the direction of Dr. Lerond Curry, Averett offered to the curriculum an Honors Colloquium designed to deal with contemporary issues.
- 1973: The first recipient of an Honorary Degree from Averett College was Joseph M. Taylor, President of Danville Community College.
- 1974: Paula Simms was the first African-American student to be selected as the college's representative to the state's Apple Blossom Festival as Apple Blossom Princess.

- 1974: Danville's Stratford College closed due to financial hardship. Stratford seniors were allowed to complete their senior year at Averett.
- 1974: Averett students, determined to make their college the first in Virginia to field Streakers, donned black capes and Streaked through the campus. The next evening the Danville police were called to direct traffic as Danvillians turned out by the thousands for an anticipated repeat performance.
- 1976: Averett joined NCAA Division III Dixie Intercollegiate Athletic Conference with teams in eight sports: men's golf, men's soccer, women's field hockey, coeducational riding, men's and women's basketball, and men's and women's tennis.
- 1976: Joyce Weiblen, Athletic Director, coined the term *Cougars* as a nickname for the college's athletic teams, using a play on words "Atlantic Coast Conference" and "Averett Cougar College."
- 1976: The Mountain View Apartments were acquired.
- 1977: The Admissions House at 334 West Main was acquired. It was later dedicated and named for Trustee W. Curtis English.
- 1978: Averett College's first Homecoming was held. SGA Vice-President Rossie Alston, '79, spearheaded the effort to provide an annual Homecoming ceremony. Since 1978, a Homecoming Queen has been elected, and since 1988 a Homecoming King.
- 1979: President Conwell Axel Anderson resigned.
- 1979: William Howard Lee was named president.
- 1979: Averett fielded its first women's fast pitch softball team.
- 1980: The first Master of Education degrees were conferred.
- 1980: The men's soccer team captured the Dixie Conference Championship and the Virginia State Championship.
- 1981: Through the generosity of Jacob M. "Jack" Kleinoder, the Kleinoder Field was constructed from the old Sydnor Athletic field, located at the corner of Mt. View Avenue and Surry Lane. It was rebuilt as a soccer field, but was used for other games as well as for Commencement ceremonies.
- 1981: Aviation was offered as a minor for students in Business Administration/Aviation Management.
- 1983: Tennis courts were built across the street from the parking lot on Surry Lane.

- 1983: A new President's home at 500 Hawthorne Drive was acquired from the estate of Mrs. A. B. Carrington, Jr.
- 1984: Dr. Jay Hayes, professor of history, published A History of Averett College.
- 1984: Northern Virginia International Program opened at Columbia Baptist Church, in Falls Church.
- 1984: Averett's first M.B.A. students were enrolled.
- 1984: The Ada Nunn Frith Hall was constructed, a four-story brick building to house classrooms, laboratories, and faculty offices.
- 1984: A time capsule was buried on the site of Frith Hall. The capsule contained a copy of George Orwell's *1984*, an Averett orientation package, a popular 45 RPM record, a college patch, a stopwatch, a list of research topics from psychology students, a sheet of gospel music, a copy of the application and tuition check from the college's first M.B.S. student and, courtesy of the Parents Association, a copy of a tuition bill.
- 1985: President William Howard Lee retired.
- 1985: Frank Ross Campbell was inaugurated as the new president.
- 1985: Rat night tradition of "initiating" freshmen ended.
- 1986: The Jordan Common was built and named in memory of Trustee Robert S. Jordan.
- 1986: The first M.B.A. degrees were conferred.
- 1986: Trial Advising Program (TAP) began in the fall, a precursor to IDS.
- 1987: The college's Annual Fund topped \$1 million for first time in its history.
- 1987: President Frank Campbell initiated the first Founder's Day celebration, which was held on March 17 with Malcom Huckabee, Provost, addressing the faculty, staff, alumni and friends who gathered in Pritchett Auditorium.
- 1988: Averett Adult Curriculum for Excellence (AACE) program opened academic centers in Danville (SOVA) and Vienna (NOVA). This was a non-traditional distance-learning program whereby working adults through an accelerated format could receive an A.A. or a B.A. in business administration.
- 1988: The AACE house at 146 Woodland Avenue was acquired.
- 1988: The AACE admissions house at 303 Robertson Avenue was acquired.

- 1988: The first IDS were classes held.
- 1990: The North Campus (707 Mt. Cross Road) and the Equestrian Center (1231 Gammon Road, Pelham, NC) properties were acquired.
- 1990: The first graduates of the AACE program received degrees.
- 1990: A new graphic identity was introduced for Averett.
- 1991: The Emily Swain Grousbeck Music Center was constructed on Mt. View Avenue, providing practice rooms, a music library, a media center, classrooms and a recital hall.
- 1991: Averett began leasing space at the Danville Regional Airport (424 Airport Drive) for its aviation program. A Bachelor's degree in Airway Science was initiated.
- 1992: The College opened a Central Virginia Center in Richmond.
- 1992: The first Honors Convocation was held. This ceremony was established for the recognition of superior academic achievements of students in the various disciplines. Faculty members from each department presented the awards.
- 1993: The new Equestrian Center was built on 100 acres in Providence, NC. The facilities included an indoor ring, a stable, and three outdoor training areas.
- 1993: The women's soccer team competed for the first time in the Dixie Conference.
- 1993: The Averett Honors Program began in the fall of 1993, emphasizing student-generated information and student-led discussions.
- 1995: The Financial Aid house at 119 Robertson Avenue was acquired.
- 1995: A house at 132 Woodland Drive was acquired for use as an Interim Student Center.
- 1995: The College began holding M.B.A. classes via interactive distance learning technology with Marine bases in Camp Lejeune, N.C. and Quantico, Virginia.
- 1995: AACE classes began in the Research Triangle Park in Raleigh, N.C.
- 1995: Averett received the largest gift in its history, a \$2.84 million dollar bequest from the estate of former Trustee Mary B. Blount of Roanoke.
- 1995: Residence hall rooms were wired for cable television and equipped with analog phone lines. All Averett students were provided with voice mail capabilities.
- 1996: The David S. Blount Chapel in Frith Hall was dedicated.

- 1996: Bishop Hall's Conference Center was created.
- 1996: AACE classes began in the Tidewater Center at Virginia Beach.
- 1996: Averett's men's baseball team played its first full schedule of conference play.
- 1996: The alumni *Potpourri's* name was changed to *Current Magazine*.
- 1997: North Campus baseball, softball and soccer fields were completed.
- 1998: The E. Stuart James Grant Convocation and Athletic Center was completed on property across the Dan River, at the newly acquired North Campus.
- 1998: AACE changed its name to Graduate and Professional Studies, or GPS.
- 1999: A new Security System was purchased using ID cards for all door locks.
- 2000: The Averett Commons apartments opened, built on the former Kleinoder soccer field.
- 2000: The Digital Media Lab was opened in bottom Frith.
- 2000: A new Football Field House was completed.
- 2000: Averett partnered with Virginia Tech and DCC on Aug. 31 to establish a new learning center in the area.
- 2001: The Blackboard computer system was installed on campus.
- 2001: The College name was changed to Averett University on July 1.
- 2001: The first diplomas as Averett University were awarded on Dec. 3.
- 2002: Frank Ross Campbell retired from the presidency on June 30.
- 2002: Richard Anthony Pfau began his term as the new president on July 1.
- 2003: President Pfau's inauguration was held on March 29.
- 2003: The Averett Cougars won their first Dixie Conference Baseball Tournament, played at Dan Daniel Park, with a win against Christopher Newport (April 19, 2003). It was the first conference championship win in the program's 8-year history, with Ed Fulton as Coach.
- 2003: The last issue of alumni *Current Magazine* was the Winter 2003 issue.
- 2003: Averett opened a new GPS campus in Lynchburg, Virginia, in May.

- 2004: A Groundbreaking ceremony was held for a new student center, Oct. 14, to be located at the corner of Woodland and Townes streets.
- 2004: Averett women's softball team captured its first USA South Conference tournament championship. Head Coach Kathy Boccock led the Cougars.
- 2004: Dr. Jay Hayes, professor of history, published The Lamp and The Cross: A History of Averett College, 1859-2001.
- 2005: GPS added an M.Ed. program in the Lynchburg VA area for Spring 2005.
- 2005: Averett's freshman IDS program was scrapped. The new START program was initiated.
- 2005: The Baptist General Association of Virginia cut their ties with Averett on April 6.
- 2005: An anti-gay group from Kansas picketed the May Graduation ceremony.
- 2005: In May, two new graduation awards for GPS students were given: the Malcolm Knowles and Frank R. Campbell awards for high grades.
- 2005: The test flight of NASA's Small Aircraft Transportation System (SATS) took place at the Danville Regional Airport. NASA selected Averett as the general manager of the SATS Lab project.
- 2006: The Graduate and Professional Studies Program announced the expansion of its accelerated Master of Education degree program to Chesapeake, Martinsville, and Richmond.