

EXTRA



The Ring-tum Phi



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W&L to go coed in '85

By MIKE ALLEN
and BRUCE POTTER
Chief Editors

Washington and Lee University will begin admitting women in the fall of 1985, the Board of Trustees decided July 14 after a two-day special meeting.

The decision ends 235 years of all-male tradition at Washington and Lee and leaves only a handful of all-male, non-military liberal arts colleges.

The resolution, passed 17-7 by the trustees after what was described as a "civil" yet "vigorous" debate, reads as follows:

"Resolved, that Washington and Lee University shall admit qualified students, regardless of gender, to all of its degree programs commencing in the Fall of 1985."

The decision was announced at a 12:45 p.m. press conference in the Commerce School. Nearly 50 media representatives attended the conference. About 100 students and faculty members watched the press conference on television monitors in Reid Hall.

Reading from a statement prepared by the board, which had voted on coeducation at 11:50 a.m., Rector James M. Ballengee said, "We are convinced that a stronger Washington and Lee and a stronger society will be the happy result of the decision we have made."

As many as 100 women will be admitted in the fall of 1985, said University President John D. Wilson, adding that the board had hoped the school would have as many as 500 women students within 10 years.

Wilson spoke of the "integrity, honor and character here," as well as "our superior teaching and learning and academic program."

"We believe that these values that are so important to Washington and Lee can and will be enjoyed by men and women equally, and that they will help to contribute to making these as much a part of the future as they have been of the past," he continued.

Wilson also said at the press conference that he had voted in favor of the motion. Although he said he didn't specifically make a recommendation to the board, he was the first member to speak on the issue Saturday morning.

"I suppose that could be construed as a recommendation," Wilson said.

Another member of the board, whom Ballengee declined to identify, made the motion to adopt the resolution.

Executive Committee President Cole Dawson and former EC President Robert C. Jenevein represented the student body in the trustees' closed sessions. Jenevein traveled to the meeting from Dallas at his own expense.

Looking worn but enthusiastic, Dawson talked with reporters following the trustees' press conference. "It's going to take an effort of the whole student body to implement coeducation in a positive way," he said.

"It was really exciting when it happened. I still cannot believe the course of history has changed right here at Washington and Lee."

Dawson said he was in favor of coeducation. "I didn't come out and directly tell them that, exactly," he said. "I told them at the end that my feelings were toward coeducation."

"I don't think the market is there for an all-male school," he added. "This school's not marketable as an all-male institution."

Charles D. Hurt Jr. of Atlanta, president of the Alumni Association, and former Alumni Association President Peter A. Agelasto III, represented the alumni at the meeting.

Among reports received by the board this weekend was an analysis of an alumni survey conducted this spring by a Richmond research firm. Of the 6,700 alumni who responded to that survey, 58.5 percent said they opposed coeducation, 28.9 percent said they favored it, and 10.6 percent said they had no opinion.

Although Hurt said he did not make a specific recommendation that the board defeat coeducation, he did say the board was aware of the alumni's feelings because "we have had a continuous communication with the board as a whole as well as individually."

Alumni will support the decision, Hurt added. "I think the decision was the right decision, and I think the alumni will accept the decision," he said.

In its statement the board



James M. Ballengee, rector of the board of trustees, announces the board's decision at a press conference early Saturday afternoon in the Commerce School. From left to right are former U.Va. President Edgar F. Shannon Jr., W&L President John D. Wilson, Ballengee and Virginia Supreme Court Justice A. Christian Compton. (Photo by Cotton Puryear)

noted that "within the Board's membership itself opinion was divided, and the vote on the resolution's adoption, while strongly in favor, was not unanimous. However, now that the decision is made, the Trustees are united in pledging their full commitment to the successful implementation of the University's new course."

At the press conference, Ballengee said, "We determined in advance that a decision of this magnitude should not be made by what one would call a slim majority or a narrow majority." He added that the number of votes in favor of coeducation, 17, exceeded the number of votes the board had decided to require, but he declined to identify that number.

Two other trustees, A. Christian Compton of Richmond and Edgar F. Shannon Jr. of Charlottesville, attended the press conference.

Shannon was president of the University of Virginia when it first began accepting female students.

Compton said he voted against coeducation "because I feel that we have put in place at this university a fine-tuned educational machine which is providing a high-quality education in a single-sex atmosphere," and has produced "a body of outstanding alumni who have

succeeded eminently in all walks of life."

However, Compton said, "Those of us who love and support Washington and Lee will work just as hard to make coeducation another positive factor as far as W&L is concerned."

"There is no appeal," added Compton, a justice of the Virginia Supreme Court.

Shannon noted that the board studied many financial projections before making the decision.

Ballengee described the discussion preceding the vote as "entirely civil, as Washington and Lee gentlemen should be, one to another . . . There were people with differing points of view."

"All of the issues that you could possibly imagine were discussed. It was a free, full and frank discussion. I never heard anyone raise his voice. On the whole, it was polite."

Asked his feelings now that the debate finally had ended, Wilson said, "I feel exhausted, if you want to be absolutely candid about it. It's been a long and arduous undertaking, (but) frankly, a rewarding time."

"I'm just looking forward to having it all be over," he had said in an interview earlier this week.

"A decision of this magnitude

and complexity involves us all in the re-examination of this university and its character. There is a spirit alive on the campus, a spirit of humaneness.

"I feel very good about the decision. I think it was the right decision to be made," added Wilson, who, along with Ballengee, wore a Washington and Lee tie to the press conference.

Relaxing at Lee House after the press conference, Wilson expressed hope that Washington and Lee now could begin to plan for the future in other areas.

Wilson said at the press conference that the trustees authorized creation of a committee on coeducation, consisting of students, faculty and administrators, "to help guide us in every step of the way." Female law students and women faculty members will aid the committee, Wilson added.

Among planned improvements to the university's physical plant are a \$4 million to \$5 million dormitory, which has been in the works for some time, and about \$150,000 worth of renovations to the gymnasium areas to provide separate locker room and shower facilities for female students.

"I trust that you're supportive of that," Wilson added, with a laugh.

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No, we're not going to hell in a handbag

By MIKE ALLEN
Chief Editor

"We made history today.
We are the future."

--Mondale toasting Ferraro

Painful as it was, the time had come to wake up, smell the coffee, and admit women to Washington and Lee.

The "no go co" forces have reached their Appomatox. Now it's time for a little reconstruction.

The well-intentioned anti-coed people who fail to see that a well-fought battle is over are welcome to take their marbles and go home; the rest of us are going to attempt to make coeducation the best thing that ever happened to W&L.

It's heartsickening to realize that when I think of the people who love Washington and Lee the most and would do anything for it, I think of people adamantly opposed to coeducation. Those people have to feel betrayed. The hope has to be, though, that their regard for the institution is greater than their devotion to one particular aspect of it.

This has been a most unpleasant civil war. During his 1984 commencement address, President Wilson told the graduates, "I know it has concerned you that we seem to be divided on this important matter, students, faculty, alumni and staff. But

that may be inevitable on a matter of such significance, and I live in the faith that it will not be a permanently disabling condition."

We have to hope he's right.

Dr. Wilson is not, contrary to popular opinion, the Grinch that Stole Single Sex. He is a person who was willing to be the point man, and consequently to be subject to unmitigated garbage, for a change which he, rightly or wrongly, believed was the best path for the institution he'd been hired to serve.

The Board has said what the policy will be. It is now incumbent upon us, through a combination of respect and cooperation, to assist Dr. Wilson and his administration in implementing that policy as effectively and as smoothly as possible.

The student government will be an important component of that effort. As you study history, it seems that strong leaders appear when they are most needed. For the W&L student body, such a man is Cole Dawson.

His is a tough position. He follows the incredibly dedicated Bob Jenevein, who, like all prominent men, had vociferous, persistent critics. Cole, who is capable, willing to listen, and possesses integrity of the highest order, is up to the challenge.

Once an opponent of coeduca-

tion, he changed his mind upon further research and reflection. He was, like us, willing to wholeheartedly support single sex if that was what was required of him. The trustees, however, made what he came to believe was the better choice.

He, by the way, should be credited with offering one of the most cogent observations to surface during the coeducation debate: "Everyone's talking about 'male camaraderie.' What about *female camaraderie?*"

W&L going first class

By BRUCE POTTER
Chief Editor

Last summer, before the question of coeducation was placed squarely on Washington and Lee's agenda, I was talking with a co-worker who graduated from William and Mary College, a relatively small but highly regarded coeducational school in Williamsburg.

The conversation turned to colleges, and, inevitably, to Washington and Lee coeducation. Although partially in jest, a comment my colleague made that day forever will remain in my mind.

"Washington and Lee is being dragged, kicking and screaming, into the 20th century," he said.

The trustees have reached a conclusion similar to that of General Lee in April of 1865. It was time to cut their losses while what they had was still worth saving. Lee realized that the losses he was sustaining were unacceptable, that to continue would invite further decimation of his turf, and that his men's commitment to the cause was waning. The trustees have made a similar decision.

We have the rare opportunity

to take a unique and still strong institution and propel it to even greater distinction.

The trustees aren't trying to take our paradise away from us; they're making it possible for us to enhance it.

The pursuit of excellence, both in ourselves and in future students, is the key to the continued vitality and superiority of the University.

The time is now. The chance is ours. The fate is Washington and Lee's.

I believed then that his comment was fairly accurate, and since, I have come to realize that it was even more so. Now, after last weekend's decision, we have really entered the 20th century.

And if each of us works at making coeducation succeed, Washington and Lee once again can join the ranks of the most illustrious colleges in the nation — a position the school certainly deserves.

No longer will we have to be dragged into the 20th century. We can now move into the 21st century with our head held high, knowing that we had the courage to make a decision — in many ways unpopular and in all ways difficult — that will benefit this university.

Many people assume that Lexington and Washington and Lee are quiet during the summer. This is not entirely so. A group of 17-year-olds, rising high school seniors known as Summer Scholars — both male and female — were on campus this month, participating in various programs the university offers.

Also on campus this past week were tourists — again both male and female — from all over the country.

They, too, marveled at the beauty and grace of Washington and Lee, and its history and quality.

We must ask: If they had visited Blacksburg, would they have toured Virginia Tech?

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New student body president reacts to coed decision

To the editors:

The result of this weekend's decision is one that will no doubt hit a nerve in the heart of everyone associated with Washington and Lee.

Never before in W&L's history has an issue fostered so much controversy and stirred so much emotion. Washington and Lee has survived many battles and coed will be another one — Washington and Lee is and always will be a distinguished university, due to its unique educational atmosphere. It will continue to produce honorable, intelligent, well-rounded individuals who will be the movers and shakers in our society.

Twenty years ago we were one of many all-male institutions. We were not simply "another" all-male institution, we were unique and will remain so, for the same reasons, far into the future. We have a strong tradition of honor, integrity and strength of character, along with the many values and ideals instilled in our university by General Lee.

After the Civil War, Lee had been defeated — his beloved South had lost all that it had believed in for so long. But he came to Washington College with an optimistic attitude that the future would hold more than what many believed to be a hopeless destiny. With his

strength of character and will to succeed, he created a fine institution — a better Washington and Lee. This may seem trivial and trite, but we must have similar courage to strengthen our university — to use this opportunity to bring W&L up to its full potential.

The chemistry of W&L's present atmosphere will change, but the fundamental foundation of the W&L experience will go on. This weekend's decision is hard to swallow. Walking around campus after the decision, I had a gut-wrenching feeling in my stomach that came from the apprehension and uncertainty of the future. Will the intangibles so crucial to the W&L experience be lost, or will the admission of women strengthen our university and all that it stands for?

At one time, Washington and Lee competed strongly with such schools as Davidson, Duke and U.Va. There is no question that W&L provides a much more unique and broadening education than these schools, but as of 1983 those schools were only accepting 33 percent of their applicants to fill their freshman class, whereas we now accept 60 percent of our applicants. The percentage has gone from 40 percent in 1965 to 49 percent in 1982, 57 percent in '83, and 60 percent in '84. The education that W&L offers, although unique and

highly regarded by its students and alumni, is simply not that attractive anymore. I know, as I'm sure you do, of many who considered W&L but shied away due to the single-sex factor — also, many guys who were W&L material who came and transferred due to the all-male character.

I will truly miss the mystical all-male quality of W&L, but am confident that admitting women is a positive move and one that will make W&L a stronger institution in the future.

Contrary to seemingly popular opinion, it was not President Wilson who brought coeducation to the forefront and it is not his "fault" (not a fault at all, in fact) that we are destined to be a coeducational institution. I really believe that we are fortunate to have such an outstanding president. Watching him in the May board meeting and this weekend, I have seen an individual with as much dedication to Washington and Lee as any person I have ever seen. His knowledge and emotions for the school are admirable and deep-rooted.

Lastly, let me add that our present Board of Trustees is the result of 15 years of careful and deliberate selection by our former president, Robert E.R. Huntley. This board has been acknowledged as one of the

strongest groups of individuals to govern the school in its history. They are all deeply rooted traditionalists, each of them as dedicated to the university and to the preservation of the unique quality and character of education at W&L as the next. There were tears in their eyes as they said goodbye to a 235-year-old tradition, and literally near tears as they gave their last statements before the vote.

I know many students and alumni think W&L's traditions have been irrevocably lost. I hope, though, that you will all pledge your support for a better Washington and Lee — the

school we love so much. The decision was a hard one — one that took into consideration both students' and alumni's views very seriously. Almost all day Friday was spent considering those opinions. But the decision has been made and the future and destiny of W&L has begun a new course. Listening to W&L's Latin motto, "Non in cautus futuri" — "Not unmindful of the future" — remember this as you look to tomorrow: We have so much to gain with a positive attitude.

Sincerely,
Cole Dawson

The Ring-tum Phi

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Wilson: 'Integrity, honor' make W&L unique

Following are excerpts from an interview with President Wilson conducted at Lee House following the July 14 press conference.

Q. — Throughout the meetings this weekend, was there ever a point at which you thought the board might not be able to reach a decision?

A. — Well, we spent a long time discussing the pros and cons of delay, simply to defer a decision until students and alumni could become more fully acquainted with the whole range of issues that the board was struggling with. That might be efficacious, but the board finally decided that would be a very bad thing to do, that it would be better in a way to reject it than to stretch it out and to keep secondary schools, prospective students, current students and key alumni all wondering what you were going to do. I don't think it was really necessary. It's been a long study, really, about a year.

Q. — What can students who are here now and will be entering in the fall do to help smooth the transition to coeducation?

A. — That is a very, very crucial part of the whole success that we hope to achieve. I'm not sure I have a blueprint in mind now. . . . I think I'll sit down with the Executive Committee (in the fall) and get their suggestions on how that might work. We're going to name a steering committee on coeducation — they'll give us advice and counsel on that. But you know finally it's going to depend upon the generosity of spirit of

the Washington and Lee men to say that 'we have a good thing and we want to share it. The board has decided we have to share it with women students equally and let's see how to make it easiest for these girls.'

Q. — Do you think the first few classes of females might have a problem fitting in?

A. — I believe that that's been the experience at other places — that they have felt they're going to be a very small minority for some years while the numbers build up. And that's always a



problem with feeling a little bit special and a little bit different before they become integrated into student life on the newspaper staff, the radio station, student government. That will take probably a few years. I am sure there are ways of doing things, ways of talking, ways of pretending women aren't there that we'll have to try to remold, all of us. It will require some sensitivity. At Yale I think they

found a lot of their organizational structure had to change. The Outdoor Club never dreamt that there would be women applying. Well, they applied. But I trust we'll have little difficulty with that. But I must say, at first, when I discovered last fall how strongly the students felt, or at that time felt, I was never sure whether the students were simply reacting to the idea or whether they were taking real thought about the future and well-being of their alma mater. I think, as the year went on, as more and more factors were brought out into the open, that some of that sharp antagonism tended to soften.

Q. — Why did you take so long to express directly your opinion on the issue?

A. — Let me say this, that my opinion was formed, again, over an evolutionary process over time. I had a meeting with my staff up on the mountain in July of last summer. Of course, I arrived in January. My faculty conversations began then in earnest; I had had fall conversations with staff about various aspects of university life. Then when I got here, I started these faculty conversations and then my senior dinners went on that spring. And by May I had learned enough from the admissions side about the quality and declines in the key areas. It is not easy to dismiss the fact that we have fewer students from the upper quintile of their high school graduating classes today than we had 15 years ago, remarkably fewer, you can't

just say, 'Well, heck.' That's an important factor in keeping this place strong and in keeping the respect of the school. When I spoke to the alumni association in May, I said, 'I'm going to mention something you're not going to want me to mention but it's something I think we're going to have to look at.' That was in May, but I was still a long way from knowing what my own mind would be. Last summer, when I was up on the mountain with my staff — just the administration, we spent two days up there — and that was only one topic, but it was the last one, and we talked it all through. At that point, I said, 'I really do think this is something that the board's going to have to look at.' But I am not sure even then that I was then tending toward a positive evaluation of the prospect. But I have — oh, I can't remember how many alumni groups I'd met by that time; there were not all that many, it was in the next year that I went out to some 30 or 40. I talked to people from the paper I wrote in October, I started to get feedback. And that's when you start to question yourself. I had self-doubts about this all along. I did think it was right to raise the questions associated with it. But I was perfectly prepared, for example, to have the board say, 'I think it's the right thing to do, probably, but this is the wrong time to do it or that the alumni disaffection might be so strong as to make it not wise.' So I didn't declare myself early because I hadn't really made up my mind in any firm, firm way until fairly recently. It was pretty widely known that I wouldn't have permitted the subject to arise at all if I had found it an absolutely unacceptable alternative to the university. That's what upset some of the alumni. They assumed that I must have come here with my mind made up. I came here, having talked with the board about it, the board committee on presidential search, and that committee said, 'How do you feel about coeducation? How do you think about coeducation?' We talked at some length, and I said I thought that the institution's decision in the earlier years not to endorse coeducation was admirable if it was proud of what it was doing and if it was healthy and it was expert at educating men in isolation. . . . then I had not any logical difficulty with that. If, on the other hand, we entered into difficulties, I said that then I wouldn't hesitate to raise it with the board. And they said, 'Well, we would want you to do that.'

Q. — Which of the advantages of coeducation was the most important to the board?

A. — The academic quality, without question.

Q. — Even more than the demographics?

A. — Oh, yes. The question that the board asked is 'How can this

institution improve its academic standing, ensure its reputation of academic excellence?' That was the question. 'And by remaining all-male, what chances do we have of that? By changing, what chances do we have of that?' The board committees all reported out in due course. The Campus Life committee concluded in its examination that co-curricular life, extra-curricular life would on balance be better with men and women together. The Academic Affairs committee report said on balance, in fact, the academic quality of our students would improve and the quality of discourse in the classroom and the whole ambiance of the academic side of life.

Q. — You said that Washington and Lee was unique in ways other than being all-male. Now that we are coeducational, what are some of those other ways in which we are unique?

A. — Of course, any institution can make claims of that sort, but I do think there's a pattern of success here that is traceable to a heightened sense of mutual caring. I don't want to exaggerate that, but I think the students have a lot of respect for each other and look out for each other and have a lot of respect for the faculty and vice versa, so that creates an environment of, we call it civility, but of mutual trust. That translates still further into an absolute willingness by the faculty to meet with students and to be of help to them, in their personal lives as well as in their academic work, and that, in turn, I think, has managed to contribute to the cultivation of self-confidence, and ultimately we have a greater measure of success in the world. I think that it is important for us to try to recruit classes with the same human qualities in our women students that we've managed over the years to have represented in our male student population. In other words, I think character and integrity and honor and a desire to learn — all of these things are important parts of Washington and Lee and I am most anxious to ensure that those qualities are enhanced by our women students.

Q. Do you think we'll have any problem recruiting women?

A. I think the whole admissions area is going to be very difficult for all colleges and universities, when the University of Pennsylvania opens a West Coast office of admissions, and Oberlin sends out messages to its alumni that new admissions efforts are going to be required to get through this decade — these are strong institutions, coeducational institutions — I have no doubt that our work will be cut out for us. I think this decision will help us in that work, but I don't think it will provide some quick solution.

Opinion

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If they had visited Richmond, would they have toured Virginia Commonwealth University?

Perhaps not. Although both are good universities, they are missing something that Washington and Lee has. It's an intangible that's difficult to describe, but it extends beyond the "all-male spirit" of which we are so proud. Perhaps it has something to do with the stately Colonnade, its freshly painted columns shining in the summer sun, the ivy climbing up the back of its buildings. Or perhaps it is the new library and Law School, modern buildings that blend in so well with those constructed 200 years ago. Or perhaps it is the statue of George Washington atop the building named after him, visible from anywhere on campus, seeming to watch over us all.

Now, though, we can make the further improvements and changes necessary to return to that upper echelon of colleges and universities. Washington and Lee can once again become a force to be reckoned with, rather than a small, liberal arts school in the Shenandoah Valley that is offering a choice fewer and fewer college-age students

seem to want.

Washington and Lee's doors no longer will be closed to women. No longer will we have to turn away more than 50 percent of the population. No longer will the fine education of Washington and Lee be available to men alone.

That, I believe, is the crucial point. What right does (or did) Washington and Lee have to deny an education to a woman?

Those tourists this weekend, those Summer Scholars, obviously found the Washington and Lee campus and atmosphere enjoyable and enlightening. Several female Summer Scholars promised to apply here next year for the fall of 1985. They realize that the first few classes of women at Washington and Lee may have difficulties, but they were willing to risk that for a chance to participate in the Washington and Lee experience.

And we have no right to deny them that opportunity, based on a philosophy that became outdated in the mid-1900s and seems archaic today.

The Board of Trustees made the right decision this weekend — the decision that had to be made. In many cases, they may have put their true personal feel-

ings aside for the betterment of this university.

The debate over coeducation undoubtedly has been long. It has lasted sporadically for more than 15 years. Opinions have fluctuated wildly. Students, faculty and alumni have disagreed on the issues. There has been a great deal of discussion about this university and its place in American collegiate society.

But this introspective discussion, whether for or against coeducation, has been helpful. We have undergone a rigorous process of self-examination and have found faults with the system in areas other than those related to coeducation. Without question, Washington and Lee has lost something by the decision — but we have gained more.

With the settlement of the coeducation question, we can now turn to fixing those other problems. Now is the time to put aside the arguments and the bitterness, the slogans and the bumper stickers.

We all must join together, so that Washington and Lee can stride boldly and aggressively into the future — as the two great men who gave us our name would have wanted us to do.



A sign in the University Library guards steps leading to Northern Auditorium, where the board of trustees met for the weekend to make its decision. (Photo by Cotton Puryear)

McHenry optimistic

By PAUL FOUTCH
News Editor

Although Washington and Lee's athletic department will feel many of the effects of coeducation, Athletic Director William McHenry expressed optimism that the changes will not be too drastic.

One of the major concerns in the athletic department was that coeducation without an increase in total enrollment — the change approved by the Board of Trustees July 14 — would reduce the pool of prospective male athletes, causing a drop in the quality of W&L sports.

But McHenry said in an interview after the decision that only the sports with larger squads — such as football, baseball and soccer — will feel the effects.

"I think probably in some sports there won't be a negative effect at all," McHenry said.

At the press conference announcing the coed decision, university President John D. Wilson predicted a \$150,000 initial cost for the changes needed on the Warner Center.

McHenry said these will include dividing the locker room in half, providing separate entrances to the weight room and the old pool, and adding more offices on the upper level of the gym.

Another change required by coeducation will be the addition of female staff members, including a women's athletic director and a trainer.

"I would hope that there would not be an elimination of any of our current coaches and teachers," McHenry said.

McHenry predicted that additional field space, which he said was needed even if W&L remained all-male, would include an artificial, all-weather field, an all-weather track and one or two more playing fields.

The first female varsity sports to be introduced will probably be limited to individual sports, such as swimming, track, golf and cross-country, McHenry said, with five or six sports offered in the first two years and 10 to 12 within five years.

Campus reactions vary

The Board of Trustees' decision to begin admitting women to Washington and Lee in the fall of 1985 evoked many reactions from faculty, students and staff who were on campus for the decision:

- Former EC President Robert C. Jenevein, who once vigorously opposed coeducation but says he has since modified his position, looked tired and disconsolate after the meeting, but said he hoped the students would make coeducation work.

"They have to open their arms to the new Washington and Lee," he said. "That won't be impossible by any stretch of the imagination."

- Nearly 100 faculty and students watched the press conference on television monitors in Reid Hall. For the most part, they greeted Ballengee's words with applause and listened attentively to the remainder of the press conference, chuckling appreciatively at the appropriate moments.

- Among those watching with interest was Peter Whitehead, who graduated in May but was one of the leading pro-coeducation students. Whitehead had unfurled a banner at the Mock Democratic Convention that read: "Better Coeds than Deadheads."

"I think the trustees made an unpopular decision, but it was a good one," Whitehead said. "I am pleased. Now I think we'll see better male and female students."

- Another student who came to Lexington to hear the decision was Scott Tilley, a rising senior and opponent of coeducation.

"I was very disappointed," Tilley said. "Up to the last moment, I didn't think they'd do it."

"I think Washington and Lee as an institution is going to thrive and will continue, but I have the feeling that as of today, the Washington and Lee I've come to know and love no longer exists."

- Dr. Louis W. Hodges, a professor of religion and ethics who led a committee which studied coeducation in 1969, called it "just a splendid decision."

"I can't imagine anything that would have done more to improve the education environment," he said. "The board is to be commended. They worked at it very carefully, and rendered what is certainly the right decision."

- A faculty member who opposed coeducation and asked not to be identified because he says he plans "to keep a low profile henceforth," said the initial female applicants to W&L are likely to be "young ladies on the prowl."

"Washington and Lee is going to become Fort Lauderdale North," he said. "Most girls are going to enroll here because this is 'Where the Boys Are.'"

- In the face of all the philosophical and academic viewpoints of the day, some were more concerned about the practical implications of the decision. "Big John" Alexander, who has been a W&L custodian for 10 years, said he opposed coeducation.

"Women are one of the most beautiful things God put on earth, but they're so much messier than men," he said very seriously.

- Betty Munger, who said she advocated coeducation in the 16 years she was the W&L bookstore manager, was amused but not surprised at all the media attention given the vote. "It is interesting that a small college in the backhills of Virginia should be debating whether to educate women," she said.

- As President John D. Wilson exited the news conference, he made a jesting reference to his daughter, Sara, who will be a high school junior in the fall.

"I want you all to know my daughter won't be coming here," he said. "I didn't want to be accused of being self-serving."

Coed

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Some of the 17 fraternities "could go under" because of the decreased male population, Wilson said, although he noted that some of those are already financially unstable.

"We do have a commitment to our fraternities," Wilson added. "Even now, they're undergoing some self-reformation, and we're going to encourage that in every way possible."

The possibility of sororities on campus will be discussed when the women arrive in 1985, Wilson said.

Twenty-two of the board's 25 members are alumni.

Thomas K. Wolfe, who was elected to the board in December but has not been sworn in, did not attend the meeting because of a weekend deadline on the serialized novel he is writing for *Rolling Stone*.

T. Hal Clarke voted by

telephone from Scotland, where he was traveling, and J. Alvin Philpott voted by telephone from North Carolina.

A number of press accounts of the event took note of the days on which the trustees' discussions were held. "Yes, we know that yesterday was Friday the 13th and that today is Bastille Day," News Office Director Jeffrey G. Hanna said in a press kit distributed at the news conference.

Wilson said in an interview before the meeting that he hadn't expected "the degree of broader public interest in the decision here."

"The hoopla continues around us," he said. "That all, frankly, surprises me, but it does indicate that Washington and Lee has a special place in Virginia and in the South, especially. People are interested in what happens here."

Wilson, who assumed the presidency early in 1983, received criticism from several quarters while the debate and study on coeducation were in progress. Prior to the trustees' meeting, he was asked how a decision one way or the other would affect him as a person and as an administrator.

"...There are some who do believe that I came with a settled mind on the question and are in some measure alienated from me personally," he said.

"If the decision is to admit young women to degree candidacy, how soon will the students and alumni members who opposed it reconcile themselves to it? Will they at all, and if so, when? Mixed up in that, somehow, is how soon, if at all, they will be willing to give support to my administration."

The issue of coeducation has been debated frequently at W&L, beginning in 1888.

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