

## **News from the President's Office and Board Report for Sept. 26, 2015, Meeting**

### FOUNDERS' DAY

This has been a particularly busy time for all of us. Founders' Day weekend, coupled with a meeting of the board of directors, created a lot of activity on campus. Many have commented to me that they were moved by the Founders' Day ceremony, including the special time at Monument Hill. There, board chair Teresa Pike Tomlinson '87 laid a rose at the base of the memorial on which these words had been inscribed:

#### **We kept the faith**

**College saved**

**Vision endures**

**Roses still bloom**

**July 2, 2015**

This seemed to be a particularly fitting way to commemorate the extraordinary and highly successful efforts of the alumnae and friends of the College to save this school from closing. Thanks to all of you who participated in the rescue effort. Thanks also to so many of you who attended the Founders' Day activities. And special thanks to those on campus who planned the ceremony, set up (and took down) the hundreds of chairs, the podium and other facilities in very wet weather. It was clearly a community effort.

It was wonderful to see our seniors marching in the academic procession. The audience's obvious excitement at seeing them reflected the recognition that Sweet Briar College is truly back in business!

### BOARD MEETING

During Founders' Day weekend, the Sweet Briar Board of Directors met on campus Saturday morning, Sept. 26, 2015. The primary topics of discussion were:

- The 2015-2016 budget. Because of earlier plans to close the College, no work was done on an operating budget until the new board and administration took office in early July. Therefore, work is still being done to complete a budget. With the assistance of interim chief financial officer Tom Connors and assistant CFO Gail Payne, the board reviewed tentative budget parameters. The president also reviewed potential cost savings to be reflected in the new budget. The administration indicated that the details for the budget would be available prior to the board's next meeting on Oct. 29-31, at which time the board will approve a budget. As soon as a budget is approved, budget information will be distributed to the campus and the extended community.
- Enrollment planning. Steven Nape, acting chief enrollment officer, reported on work being done to enroll students for the 2016-2017 school year. He reviewed the procedures to be employed and described how a consultant will assist us in identifying new potential applicants. He outlined the plans for enlisting alumnae to assist with enrollment and informed the board that about 150 alumnae have already received basic coaching to be able to assist with admissions. Steven reported that initial reactions to our admissions activities, such as college fairs, were very enthusiastic.

- Fundraising. Board member Mary Pope Hutson, who co-chairs the board's Alumnae Relations and Development Committee and led the Saving Sweet Briar effort to raise funds to rescue the College, reported on the planning of the committee and the administrative staff to set ambitious targets for the current year and in the years immediately following. The board acknowledged that significant fundraising must continue, particularly in the next few years while enrollment is being rebuilt. The board is reviewing the possibility of a significant fundraising drive in the coming months.

#### PRESIDENT'S TRAVELS

Immediately after Founders' Day weekend, I started a rigorous travel schedule, which included the following:

- Sept. 29-30, Wytheville, Va. — Meeting of the presidents of the Council of Independent Colleges of Virginia, where I was asked to present a program on what can be learned from the recent Sweet Briar experiences
- Oct. 1, Washington — Meeting with a member of the Washington Post editorial board and news reporter
- Oct. 2, New York City — Meeting with an alumna; meeting of the regional alumnae organization with about 75 people in attendance
- Oct. 3-4 — Philadelphia area to attend alumnae events

I previously attended a large alumnae gathering (more than 150) in Charlotte, N.C., and a very nice gathering of alumnae in Hampton Roads, Va. Later this week I will travel to Chicago for alumnae meetings there. Meetings have also been scheduled in the coming weeks in Atlanta, Richmond, Birmingham, Ala., Texas and other places. The alumnae are clearly excited about the College and are committed to continuing their passionate support for its survival. It is a real pleasure to tell them what is going on here at Sweet Briar.

Thanks to everyone on campus who contribute so much to make this an exciting and engaged community, to the board which devotes so much attention to the well-being of the College, and to our many alumnae and friends who remain so connected and committed.

Phil Stone