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The "Move to the Hill" Celebration

The Bakersfield College Archives Association

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Six BC Presidents attended: From left to right: Robert Allison, 1997-1998; John Collins, 1972-1983; Sandra Serrano, 1998-2004; Edward Simonsen, 1958-1968; Richard Wright, 1983-1997, Current President Dr. William Andrews, appointed in 2005.

It is difficult to imagine a college of 1200 students moving from an old to a new campus in a mere week. Most of us would be hard pressed to move our household belongings that quickly. Yet that is what happened in the spring of 1956 when Bakersfield Junior College left the Kern Union High School campus where it had been holding classes since 1913.

(See CELEBRATION, page 2)

CELEBRATION, cont.

On April 21, 2006, precisely fifty years after that "move to the hill," a dinner celebration was held on campus. A capacity crowd of over four hundred attended the event including many of the students, staff, and faculty who had taken part in the move. Also in attendance were many current staff members and community supporters. Honored at the dinner was Dr. Edward Simonsen, who was given the responsibility of supervising the move by President Ralph Prator.

Attendees were treated to short video presentations on the move and the career of Dr. Simonsen. Don Rodewald was the witty Master of Ceremonies, and the speakers

presented their impressions of the college in 1956. Gerald Haslam, then a student and now a prominent California author, led off the program, followed by Lily Misono Culver, the secretary who "ran the college" under President Burns Finlinson. John Collins, BC President Emeritus, who was a faculty member and track coach in 1956, gave his impressions and Dr. Simonsen, better known as "Si," was the final speaker. Both BC President Bill Andrews and KCCD Chancellor Sandra Serrano welcomed the guests and took part in unveiling the architectural renderings of newly named "Edward Simonsen Performing Arts Center" currently being remodeled.



Lily Misono Culver invited Charlie Mae Littlejohn to add to her remarks.



Chancellor Sandra Serrano displays a plaque to be placed in the Edward Simonsen Performing Arts Building.

BC President Emeritus Richard Wright chaired the celebration's planning committee, composed of Bob Allison, Amber Chiang, John Collins, Charlotte Cox, Carol Cunningham, Greg Goodwin, and Jan Rockoff. Former students from 1956 who helped develop a mailing list for the event included: Mary Ellen Elliott Agan, Micki Baker Burcher, Mari Lynn Conley, Carol Welsh Moore, Harvey Pollard, Lynne Clerou Wiswall, and Chancellor Emeritus Jim Young.

Here are many special moments of the celebration captured by Photographer Ron Littlejohn.



Emcee Don Rodewald(right) shares a story with Claire Larson and Will Flickinger(left).



Marvene Simonsen and other family members enjoy watching "Si" honored.



A time for old friends to catch up.



Emcee Don Rodewald with KCCD Chancellor Sandra Serrano and BC President Emeritus John Collins.

Planning to Visit Us?

The BAKERSFIELD COLLEGE ARCHIVES has photos and memorabilia on display and a wealth of fascinating old documents on BC's history. We are located on the 2nd floor of the new Grace Van Dyke Bird Library.

Our Hours for Fall 2006 are:

Monday -Thursday 9 AM to 12 noon and 1 PM to 3 PM
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The Bakersfield College Nursing Program

Robert Allison, Vice President
and Professor of Chemistry, Emeritus

Bakersfield College offers one of California's finest programs in professional nursing training, including both registered nursing (ADN – associate degree nursing) and licensed vocational nursing (VN). The 50th anniversary of the beginning of the registered nursing program will occur next year.

It all started in 1951 when a vocational nursing program was initiated in cooperation with Kern General Hospital (now Kern Medical Center). Its first group of nurses graduated in 1952. The program brochure published at the time defined this “new level of nursing” as follows:

A vocational nurse (formerly known as the practical nurse) is a person prepared to care for the sick in a team relationship with registered professional nurses...

The original intention of the vocational nursing program was to train nurses to address the shortage brought on by World War II. It is thought that the program might end when the registered nursing program was initiated, but this did not occur. Indeed, the program continues to this day.

The registered nursing program began at BC in 1957 under the direction of Kathryn Cafferty. Accreditation was granted in June 1958, and the first graduating class was in following year. The BC program was only the 6th to be established in California. Dr. Cafferty was particularly well qualified for the role of founder and director. She wrote the book Stepping Stones to Professional Nursing, and was one of the first nurses to earn a Ph.D. In addition, she was a good friend of Mildred Montag, author of the 1959 book, Community College Education for Nursing. In that book, Montag defined the role of the relatively new associate degree nursing programs. It is said that Montag encouraged Cafferty in her new venture. Cafferty was a true pioneer and served as the program director for 13 years. She also was a colorful personality with strong ideas and the will to carry them out. To her, the quality of the instruction and the character of the students graduating from the program were paramount. John Collins, later BC president, was a member of the nursing student selection committee at that time. He once remarked to Cafferty that every student selected for RN training at BC also was eligible for admission to the University of California. She agreed and added: “that is the standard we should be aiming for.” Some excerpts from a Bakersfield Californian article published at the time of Cafferty's death on July 13, 1988 further illustrate the kind of person she was.



Dr. Kathryn Cafferty

“She was fantastic,” recalled Edward Simonsen, president of BC from 1958 to 1968. “She started from scratch on what at that time was regarded as an experimental program.”

[Cafferty] proved to skeptics that those who completed a two-year nursing program did as just as well if not better than other nursing students.

One reason for the [program's] success was that [it] was tough, and so was Cafferty.

“...she put the emphasis on quality, on devotion to the patient. ... It was really a sight to observe her.”





Max Burdick and student.

Max Burdick, later BC Director of Nursing himself, was a student under Cafferty, graduating in 1964. He describes Cafferty as running the program with an “iron fist.” Each morning when the student nurses would report to their clinical training sites, they underwent an inspection. Skirts had to be below knee length, hair was not allowed to touch the collar, neither red nail polish nor dangling earrings were allowed, and men (very few back then) were not permitted beards or moustaches. Further, buttons on clothes could not be “puckered.” In other words, students had to watch their weight. Regarding the latter, students reported once per month to the BC school nurse for a

weigh-in. Dating was discouraged, and no dating of hospital interns was tolerated. Burdick described an incident in which Cafferty appeared during a class and asked a student to come with her. The student had been dating an intern and was immediately dismissed from the program.

Dr. Peggy Buckley, who came to BC as school nurse on Cafferty’s recommendation, directed the nursing program from the early Eighties until her retirement in 1994. She saw her primary priority as maintaining quality, a goal to which the faculty were totally dedicated. This dedication was reflected in the very high nursing board examination pass rates, always in the Nineties and sometimes 100%.

Buckley oversaw continual modifications in the program made to reflect the changing duties and expectations of nurses. That meant that new teaching materials and equipment were acquired and that program standards and student conduct rules underwent revision. Regarding the latter, all rules in the nursing student handbook were reviewed in terms of their impact on quality patient care. Those not relevant to such care were modified or eliminated; for example, rules requiring the use of caps and white hose were deleted.

Since the State Nursing Boards mandates curriculum content and program length, it was and remains necessary to revise course contents in order to reflect those mandates. Sometimes this involves informing the college Curriculum Committee and administration that an outside agency is, in effect, “telling the college what to do.”

Because of the continuing need for registered nurses and desire of many LVN’s to upgrade their certifications to the RN level, the college began an LVN to RN ladder program in 1970. This allows LVN’s to qualify to take the RN examination after one additional year of training.

Another type of ladder program was initiated in the early Eighties. This involved an agreement with California State University Bakersfield to allow BC ADN graduates to undertake two years of upper division work and graduate with bachelor’s degrees in nursing (BSN).

The local employment market for nurses has fluctuated but generally has been strong. Indeed there have been instances in which all students in a class have been hired before graduation. Community demand has increased particularly over the past decade, so much so that through collaborative programs with the local hospital council as well as almost \$2.5 million in grants, the number of students admitted annually into the ADN program has increased from 60 in the late Nineties to 170 currently. This increase has occurred under the leadership of the current director, Cindy Collier.



Cindy Collier, Nursing Director

Jon Van Boening, President of Bakersfield Memorial Hospital, says that the BC program is “a vital resource” in “providing quality health care professionals” to the community. Its value is enhanced, he says, because most graduates remain in the community.

Probably no college program has had a greater and more positive impact on the community than nursing. This is due to the extraordinary abilities and dedication of its faculty, administrators, and students – in the past as well as the present.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW? PEGGY BUCKLEY



Dr. Peggy Buckley

Peggy Buckley retired from Bakersfield College in 1994. Known for many years as the “school nurse,” she became the Director of Nursing Programs and the Chair of the Allied Health Division. Peggy's leadership built a nursing program that was a model for the state. She was a forceful leader on campus and was involved in statewide leadership with the Faculty Association of California Community Colleges.

Peggy's husband Bob worked for the Kern Community College District as Director of Accounting Services. He retired at the same time as Peggy and they moved to Penn Valley CA in the foothills east of Sacramento. Unfortunately Bob died three years ago and Peggy has had to make the difficult adjustment to living alone. Bob spent much of his retirement energy on wood working projects in a 20 by 40 foot workshop that he built. He credited Bakersfield College's Gary Cox with teaching him the valuable skills he enjoyed so much.

Son John Buckley also lives in Northern California in Petaluma where he works as a mortgage banker. John attended Bakersfield College, then went on to Davis where he met wife Julie. They have given Peggy two grand daughters, Amelia, age seven, and Sophie, age three. Luckily they all love the snow and see Peggy on their trips to the mountains.

Anyone who knows Peggy will not be surprised that her boundless energy is still with her. For sport she tries to play golf three times a week, and for relaxation she loves working in the garden. Her vocational side has involved her spending a good deal of time assisting the Hospice of the Foothills.

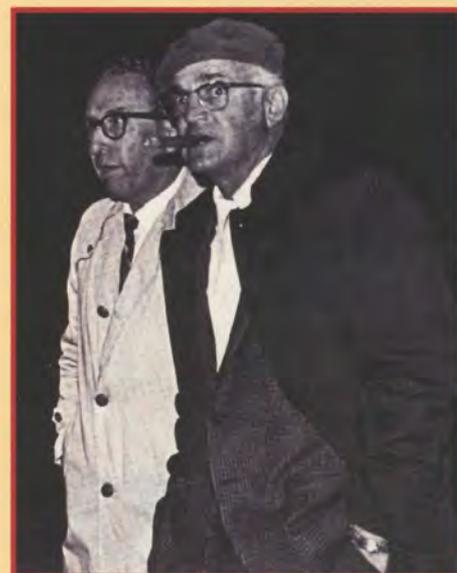
When I first spoke with Peggy on the phone she was heading out to a James Bond costume party, dressed as a blond bombshell. That's our Peggy.

ROMAIN P. CLEROU, BAKERSFIELD COLLEGE TEAM DOCTOR by Bob Covey

Dr. Romain P. Clerou offered his services as the first BC athletic team physician to Renegade football coach Jack Frost in 1946. He continued for the next thirty-four years, becoming the respected and much loved “Doc” for all college athletes.

Clerou was an All-League guard for the '34 and '35 Renegade football teams. As mentioned in the 1936 *Raconteur*, he had the nickname of “Cluck”, which, happily for him, did not follow him further. In 1936, he attended UC Berkeley with plans of becoming a teacher and coach, but found medicine more challenging; after graduating from Creighton Medical School, he was stationed in the Pacific as a medic for the U.S. Army during World War II. After the war, he returned to Bakersfield to practice medicine. He is a good example of what Tom Brokaw called “The Greatest Generation”; after fighting Fascism, they returned home to contribute in many ways to their communities.

Clerou established his medical practice in Bakersfield and offered his services to the Renegades. At the same time, his friend Dr. Bob Sheldon, (an All-Conference tackle for the Renegades in 1936) became the team doctor for the Kern County Union High School Driller football team. Since both schools were still on the same campus, both helped each other and could be seen at Driller and Renegade home contests at Griffith Field.



Dr. Romain P. Clerou (with cigar) and trainer Jack Keithley

When the Renegades moved to Memorial Stadium for football games in 1955, Clerou often drove to the away games with this wife and three children. He never missed a football game, home or away, for over three decades.

For a team physician, one of the most important yet tedious tasks is to conduct pre-season physicals for all sports. Clerou would ask Sheldon and other physicians to help check BC athletes for high blood pressure, heart irregularities, physical weaknesses that might lead to injuries in practices or games, as well as any symptoms of more serious health problems. Clerou's team of assembled doctors was very thorough. Athletes would line up to be checked by one of the doctors. One fall, an athlete happened to select the line being served by Dr. Sheldon, an eye, ear, nose, and throat specialist. Sheldon detected suspicious lump in the athlete's neck that proved to be cancer. The cancer was later removed, the young man was able to play football, and Clerou and Sheldon monitored the athlete for further symptoms of cancer as long as he was at Bakersfield College.

Clerou became locally famous as an unusually gifted diagnostician. At one home football game, an injured Santa Monica player lay on the field with severe abdominal pain. The Santa Monica head coach summoned Clerou to the infield; he suspected an abdominal hernia. He asked that the boy be taken immediately to Mercy Hospital; later that night, Clerou confirmed his on-field diagnosis and operated to repair a seriously torn abdominal wall.

At another Renegade home game, head coach Gerry Collis asked Clerou to examine one of his players who wasn't feeling well. The athlete described symptoms that didn't seem serious but still bothered Clerou. After the game Clerou again talked to the player. Clerou went home, but something about the boy's description of how he felt troubled the doctor. Two hours after the game, Clerou called Collis at home and asked that he contact the player to have him come to the hospital. Once there, tests showed the athlete had a rare but very serious and potentially life-threatening disease. It was a disease Clerou had read about but had never seen. The proper treatment was immediately started and the athlete quickly made a full recovery. Word quickly spread in Kern County of Clerou's unselfish and professional service, skills, and pleasant personality. He became one of the most respected and admired men in the county.

Clerou has given countless hours in service and thousands of dollars to a variety of BC projects. For example, in 1972, Renegade track coach Bob Covey was seeking sponsors to help pay for travel and housing for seven Renegade athletes who had qualified to compete in the National Juniors Track & Field Championships in Denver. Without hesitation, Clerou wrote a check which sent all seven to the competition.

In 1979, after thirty-four years as the Renegade team doctor, Clerou passed the team physician torch to Dr. William Baker, but remains available to support Renegade teams when needed. So when twenty-five years ago, the college built a new athletic dressing room between the gymnasium and Memorial Stadium. It was named Romain P. Clerou Fieldhouse after the doctor who had given so much to B.C. for so many years.

In the Fifties, Clerou had started wearing a red beret to Renegade football games (See photo on page 6). Doc's beret became not only a way to easily spot him on the sidelines, but started a fad of red berets, caps, and hats worn by Renegades rooters. Today at 91, "Doc" still spends a few hours each day seeing patients, plays golf three or four times a week, smokes two or more cigars a day as he has all of his adult life, and eats many evening meals with his good friend Gerry Collis at Wool Growers Restaurant. When a list is compiled of men and women who have contributed in many ways to support Bakersfield College, Dr. Romain P. Clerou's name will certainly be right at the top.

Donating to the Archives

Thinking of donating to the Archives? Here's our wish list:

Money Categories

Charter \$1,000
Founding \$500
Sustaining \$250
Contributing \$100
Friend \$35

Materials

Photographs, Event Programs
BC Publications

Memorabilia

Old diplomas, certificates
Letters and articles relating to BC

Office Equipment & Supplies

Commercial Shredder
Color Laser Printer, Tape recorders
Digital video camera

Volunteer Activities

Transcribe oral interviews
Identifying people in photographs
Office assistance: phones, etc.

Seeking an Oracle

The Archives is looking for a good Oracle! The Oracle, of course, was the Bakersfield High School yearbook. Before BC moved up to the hill, there was a section at the back of every Oracle with information about BC for the year. Articles and photos included faculty, student officers (in those days the Women's association was separate from that of the men!), as well as sports teams and scores from the big junior college games. Sports at the time surprisingly included women's basketball and soccer!

If you have an Oracle and would be willing to donate it to the Archives, please contact us at (661) 395-4949.

And if you have a Scorpion, the BC student publication pre-1923, we *really* would like to speak with you!

BC PEOPLE WE WILL MISS

H. Monroe Browne. BC ASB president in 1936 ; one of only two known BC graduates to become an Ambassador (U.S. Ambassador to New Zealand and Western Samoa in the seventies.)

Jim Burke. Community businessman and leader, he was generous to BC and to Bakersfield, enriching our community in numberless ways

Lily Misono Culver. The warm and capable “secretary” who literally ran the college under President Burns Finlinson

Richard Grass. Dapper Business Department professor.

Emmett Herrera. Jovial Security Officer of many years; his likeness is in the hand painted mural at the gym entrance.

Donna Joyce Litherland. Teacher and counselor, artist, writer, and free spirit.

Eddie “Chief” Lujan. Loyal BC supporter, volunteer, and track official who was a “Legacy Runner” in the Los Angeles Marathon, having participated in every Marathon since its inception 21 years ago

Angus Daniel Marchbanks. A graduate of Bakersfield College, he served for 21 years as a trustee for BC, including the Board Presidency.

JoAnn Miles. A true Renegade football fan, she served in the District accounting office for 39 years.

Frank Wattron. Colorful dramatist who was an alum, drama teacher, Humanities Division Chair, Associate Dean of Instruction, Institute Dean of General Education and a consummate actor. Retired in 1977.



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