

## **UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE at MARTIN**

The roots of The University of Tennessee Martin Branch go back to the founding of Hall-Moody College in 1900. It was then, at the beginning of a new century, that members of the First Baptist Church took steps that resulted in the organizing of an institution of higher learning in Martin.

Hall-Moody grew and developed and filled an important place in the field of higher education in Northwest Tennessee for more than a quarter of a century. "The Last Leaf," the final issue of the college's yearbook, leaves a poignant record of the love and pride that the students felt for their Alma Mater. In its pages is expressed heartfelt regret at what seemed at the time the end of an institution and its hallowed traditions.

It was decided in late 1926 and early 1927 by the Baptist State Convention and Hall-Moody officials that after June 1, 1927, Hall-Moody Junior College should be consolidated with Union University in Jackson in order "to allow the church to concentrate efforts on one school."

That this was not the end of a noble idea and of the revered traditions < of an honorable and useful institution soon became evident. The school had been founded on the principle that ignorance is sin, and some far-sighted , citizens of Martin and Weakley County were not willing to throw in the sponge. The dream of a bright new century was to live on untarnished and develop into a living reality.

It was these same men, trustees and friends of Hall-Moody, who led the way and made possible the infusion of a new life into a new institution of higher learning in Martin to serve the people of the area.

Prominent among these men were W. W. Jones, George Rowlett and Esquire John Hatler. Others rendered yeoman service, but these men are typical of those who exerted persistent efforts to keep the ramp of higher learning bumming in Martin and Weakley County.

Mr. Jones, who had given his services to Hall-Moody "unreservedly and enthusiastically," according to "The Last Leaf," and Mr. Rowlett, Martin attorney and a leading Baptist layman, along with others, conceived the idea of interesting the state and The University of Tennessee in taking over the buildings and grounds and establishing a tax-supported college. They worked indefatigably to gain support for the idea.

These men were able to gain acceptance of their plan. Part of the plan was for the governing bodies of the City of Martin and of Weakley County to float \$100,000 worth of bonds each, the total of \$200,000 to be used to purchase the Hall-Moody plant, to secure additional land and to add new facilities.

Squire Hatler, who was a member of the Weakley County Court at the time, canvassed the citizens of the county, traveling in a T -Model Ford, and convinced them it was a good deal for their youngsters and those to come after. He steered the \$100,000 county bond issue through the Quarterly Court.

Attorney Rowlett worked to get local support for the proposed new school and devoted a great deal of time and effort in getting the necessary legislation passed in Nashville. He also helped to sell the idea of a state junior college to The University of Tennessee officials.

On February 10, 1927, a bill was passed in the state legislature (Senate Bill 301, 1927) creating a state junior college. It was understood that the fledgling institution of higher learning would be operated by the University. Following the establishment of the school and in recognition of its importance to this area, Mr. Rowlett was appointed to the position of trustee to The University of Tennessee. He served in this capacity until 1949, and was responsible for much of the Junior College's growth and development.

The Junior College opened in the fall of 1927. Hall-Moody had held its last commencement exercises in May. Thus there was no hiatus between the closing of one school and the opening of the other. The new school had taken the torch of learning from the old without the loss of a step or a flicker of the flame.

The University of Tennessee Junior College, thus begun, was launched upon a period of a quarter century of service to the state. Over the years courses were added as enrollment and needs grew. In 1946, Look Magazine rated U. T. Junior College among the fourteen best in the nation. The school participated in the war effort, training 550 naval aviation cadets.

In 1951, the school was made a senior college by legislative enactment (House Bill 264, 1951) and its name was changed to The University of Tennessee Martin Branch. In recognition of the new status of the college and its growing importance to the area it served, an act was passed by the legislature providing for a trustee of The University of Tennessee from Weakley County. Wayne Fisher, a native of the Nineteenth District of Weakley, a graduate of U-T Knoxville, former teacher and county school superintendent, was named to the new post by Governor Frank Clement.

In 1957, still another legislative act ( Senate Bill 31, 1957 ) provided for the adding of a degree program in teacher education. A second provision of the act was the empowering of the Board of Trustees thenceforth to add such courses and degree programs as it deemed necessary to meet the needs of the area.

Accordingly, in 1961 the board approved the adding of degree programs in business administration and liberal arts. These two new degree programs, along with those in agriculture, education and home economics, brought the number to five. In addition to the degree programs, the Martin Branch of The University offers through its Liberal Arts Department the three year pre-medicine course, the required preparatory courses in dentistry, pharmacy, medical technology, law and courses in music. Two years in journalism are also offered. In the meantime, beginning with the regular session of 1944-45, The University of Tennessee Junior College had started a two-year program in basic engineering, including electrical, mechanical, industrial, and civil engineering. Prior to this time a two-year program in agricultural engineering had been offered. With the institution of new courses in basic engineering, agricultural engineering was placed under the supervision of the Agriculture Department.

Throughout its history, the school has had only two administrative heads. C. Porter Claxton served as executive officer from the college's inception to 1934. Dr. Paul Meek, vice president of

The University of Tennessee in charge of the Martin Branch, has been head of the institution since 1934. He has seen the enrollment grow from slightly more than a hundred to the 2,476 who enrolled last fall, coming from many counties of Tennessee and from some other states.

## **THE WEAKLEY COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

The Weakley County Chamber of Commerce was organized at a meeting of the presidents of all civic clubs in Weakley County on April 29, 1959. Brooks Crockett of Martin was the temporary chairman. The organization held its first meeting of 85 charter members on June 11, 1959, with the following officers elected: President-Frank Prins, Jr. ; Vice President, Greenfield-Maurice Belew; Vice President, Sharon-Bernie Harkey; Vice president, Gleason-Frank Margrave; Vice President, Dresden-W. E. Drerup; Vice President, Martin-Dessell Wright; Secretary-George Thomas; Treasurer-Carl Parks; Members of the Board of Directors were: C. T. Rawls-Greenfield; M. M. Roberts--Sharon; Ellis Featherstone-Gleason; Allen Strawbridge-Dresden; and V. P. Beard-Martin.

Some of the first goals of the Chamber were ( 1) To bring new industry to the county; (2) Organizing a country club; (3) Erection of a Hill- Burton Hospital ; ( 4) Public Housing and; ( 5) Planning Commission.

Original dues were \$10 for an individual, \$15 for single proprietor or partnership; and \$25 for a corporation. This was changed in April 1964 to \$10-\$20-\$30-\$40.

Frank Prins, Jr. served as President of the Chamber from June 1959, until June 1962, when Milton Roberts of Sharon succeeded Mr. Prins. Mr. Roberts served one term with Viron Beard of Martin elected President in June 1963.

Under President Prins a full time Executive Vice President was hired in November 1961. A special industrial development fund was formulated whereby, the cities, county, banks and electric system contributed to make this possible" Credit must be given here to Mr. Brooks Crockett and Hal Ramer for their work on this project. The first Executive Vice President was

Eugene McDonald. He served at this post until January 1963. Bill Teuton was employed to succeed Mr. McDonald in April 1963.

The Chamber has grown from a budget of \$1,400 a year and 85 members in 1959 to a \$16,000 a year budget and 265 members. In May 1964 the Chamber moved its office from one room in the courthouse to a large 3 room office building on Main Street in Dresden.

Since its inception the Chamber has played a vital role in several aspects of county growth: (1) three new industries; (2) Hill-Burton Hospital at Martin; ( 3) Public Housing has been applied for in Sharon and Martin ; ( 4) Planning Commission reorganized in Dresden and Martin; ( 5) Industrial Boards in all five towns; (6) A new country club that will be completed in the summer of 1965; (7) Reorganization of West Tennessee Industrial Association.

The following people have also served on the Board of Directors of the Weakley County Chamber of Commerce: Russell Fisher, Robert Jeter, Richard Maloan, Guy Barber, C. H. Huggins, Roy Overton, Mike Wheeling, Ira Porter, Fred Wade, Murrell Finch, Dr. Joe Anderson, Joe Barton, Frank Dodd, L. W. Mount, Bill Brooks, Ellis Trevathan, James Riley, Dr. Robert Moore, Lloyd Reavis, Les McElhiney, Sam Williams, Bill Snyder, R. W. Simmons, Cecil Powell and L. L. Bennett.

#### **CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS 1964**

Dresden-Dr. Joe Anderson, Bill Brooks, George Thomas, Lloyd Reavis  
Gleason-Frank Margrave, Ellis Featherstone, Ellis Trevathan, Leg McElhiney  
Greenfield-Frank Prins, Jr., Dr. Ira Porter, Si Williams, Joe Barton  
Martin-Viron Beard, Frank Dodd, Bill Snyder, James Riley  
Sharon-Dr. Robert Moore, R. W. Simmons, Russell Fisher, L. W. Mount

#### **OLD WEAKLEY COUNTY IS RAPIDLY GAINING STRENGTH**

In the recent Industrial Awards Dinner sponsored by the Commercial Appeal, Weakley County captured three out of five major awards, namely the Man of the Year , President of the Weakley

County Chamber of Commerce, Viron Beard; Dresden merited first place in industrial growth, and lastly Martin placed second to Milan in its category.

These are outstanding facts that citizens should well reflect on. Something new has been added to Weakley County, and to paraphrase some tired TV commercials, the new wonder working ingredient of All-4-1 has been added to make a great place to live even greater.

This wonder working ingredient All-4-1 has created a joint effort on the part of Weakley's cities, communities and even its individual residents, to show an amazing growth.

There has been in the past few years an astounding growth in the garment industry, with today more of our citizens being gainfully employed in making men's suits, ladies coats, shirts and pajamas than ever before, with further expansions now on the drawing boards.

The shoe industry has grown and in so doing has added additional personnel, together with this there are other industries making condensers and related parts} brick and clay items, boxes and shipping containers and in fear of overlooking some of our industries big or small, we can truthfully say that our industries have grown with new ones being added, not in just one locality but over the entire area.

The last statements issued by the banks in Weakley County showed a very healthy growth, and last but by no means least, that other half of our income producing sources Agriculture has thrived, for our dairying areas are growing and expanding and our rural areas in many cases are becoming show places with many lovely new homes sprouting up in every direction.

Many subdivisions have been created over Weakley County, a majority of them have been filled with modern homes, and other subdivisions are opening or are being planned.

Too, there have been many additions relating to our religious endeavors, as many new churches have been built, with additions to others, and still there are plans for more new ones, with others to be remodeled or to have additions. Never before have there been so many cars in evidence as one now sees in Weakley, and if we are any judge to speak with authority they all look like late

models, creating demands for additional parking space.

We could not do justice to so much growth in one edition of our paper, but may we sum it up to state, that we feel there is employment for all that seek it in Weakley, and that the demands for trained and competent personnel will continue to grow as long as we use the miracle ingredient All-4-1. We cannot say just when this ingredient was added, but we have a suspicion that the creation of the Weakley County Chamber of Commerce may have provided the trained hands to compound it, for we are pleased to witness the togetherness of our city and county officials when it comes to seeking new industry. No longer do we fuss and feud among ourselves, for we have truthfully found that what's good for any part of Weakley is good for all of it.

Yes, indeed, Old Weakley is Gaining Strength thru the miraculous wonder working ingredient AII-4-1. It is guaranteed to produce progress and is approved by all that share in it.

From Weakley Go. Press May, 1965.

### **WEAKLEY COUNTY COUNTRY CLUB**

The Weakley County Country Club, now under development at the time of this writing, is a further evidence of the growth and progress of the county itself. The Weakley County Chamber of Commerce recognized the need for a country club in 1961, as a part of its industrial and recreational expansion program. After thorough committee study, the Chamber approved plans to move ahead through formation of a separate chartered organization which applied for a federal financial grant, and quickly and successfully completed a membership drive for charter members at a fee of \$200 per person. There are 173 charter members.

The first Board of Directors was elected to represent all sections of the county, and Dr. Robert Moore of Sharon became the first president. A complete list of the first members of the Board follows this article. The country club is located near the center of the county, east of Sharon, just off Highway 89. The property includes 147 acres, both wooded and flat, on the highest ground in Weakley County. Professional architects have designed both the golf course and the club house. When completed in 1966, the club will have a nine hole golf course, swimming pool, and a modern and attractive clubhouse with all facilities, and will be a tremendous asset to Weakley

County.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS WEAKLEY COUNTY COUNTRY CLUB 1964-65**

Bill Mangum Dresden Cecil Powell Martin James Travis. Dresden Joe Barton. Greenfield Robert Moore, Pres.. Sharon Bob Elam Greenfield Bernie Harkey Sharon Forrest Ferguson Greenfield Joe Gardner Sharon Bobby Rawls Greenfield Moe Cavin Martin Murrell Finch. Gleason Robert N. Glasgow Martin Bob Owen Gleason Dessell Wright. Martin

**CHARTER MEMBERS-WEAKLEY COUNTY COUNTRY CLUB**

**Martin**

F. G. Cavin; Paul Meek; Beard Chevrolet Co.; Robert N. Glasgow; Dessell Wright; Fred Wade ;Charles M, Jones; Grady L. Taylor; Truitt Jones; Tom Farmer; John B. Freeman; James M. Wright; Wilson Vaughn; Doug Murphy; James Covington; James O. Moore; Richard Maloan; Harold Bell; C. E. Weldon; Brooks Crockett; Cecil Powell; James Riley; Bill Snyder; Jack Scates; Clint Wash; Sandy Truitt; Morris Vowell; Charles Lamb; Weakley County Chamber of Commerce; Willard Rooks; Pepsi Cola Bottling Co.; Volunteer Distributing Co.; H. C. Brundige; Billy McAdoo; Robert E. Harrison; Jack Dobson; J. Mac Futrell; Robert C. Glisson; Dr. James M. Moore; Cotton Pitts; William Vincent; Charles Copeland; Wesley O. Fortner; Roy Harris; James S. Corbitt; Thomas J. Whitesid; George Harrison; H. F. Boyte; E. R. Stover; T. E. Fuller; Thomas L. Erwin; Floyd Burdette; John Wall; Harold Hatler; Lloyd King; Pat Nanney; Charles Pounds

**Greenfield**

R. E. Elam; Bob Rawls; Athel Williams; Howard Caudle; Dan Ward; Conyer Rawls; Ray McAdams; Edward Maness; Bill Voorhies; Donald Cannon; Ira Porter; Travis Usery; Bill Pitts; Charles Huffstetler; Cecil James; Fred Callins; Earl J. Sullivan; Floyd Allison; Phil Harris; Forrest Ferguson; Frank Prins, Sr.; Richard Barton; Wilton Roberts; Samuel Williams; Shannon Bills; Eugene Caudle; Joe W. Stout; Joe Barton; R. D. Bishop; Wylodean Foutch; Bill Maiden; Bob Schleich; Mickey Rourke; Maurice Belew; John Marino; Bill Dudley; T. G. Caldwell; Robert L. Patterson; W. P. Belew; Nathan Porter; Tom Mullaly; Russell Milligan; Frank Prins, Jr.; Gene Sims; Joe Grooms; Jack Ray Elam



**Gleason**

Bob H. Owen; Ray Dellinger; Richard Bell; Murrell J. Finch; Edmond L. Stewart; John Herbert; L. L. Bennett; Leslie McElhiney; Dwayne Crossett; C. H. Huggins; Sam Siegel; Lewis H. Harper;

**Dresden**

Ned Morris; Robert F. Hodges; Bill Pritchett; Dr. Joe Anderson; Carl W. Parks; George C. Thomas; Hugh E. Brann; James H. Travis; Allen J. Strawbridge; W. A. Mangurn; John Alexander; Shannon Thomas; Eric E. Brooks, Jr.; Dr. R. C. Shannon; James McFall; L. L. Reavis, Jr.; Dr. E. H. Welles

**Palmersville**

Fred Rucker; A. G. Campbell

**Sharon**

B. E. Harkey; Bob Gardner; Billy Wayne Roberts; Gene Harkey; Don Gordon; Hoyt Green; Bill Cupp; Bobby Robinson; Coy Buckley; R. S. Roberts; Charles Castellaw; Mrs. R. C. Cammire; Bill Liggett; Lois Wade Mount; Jerry Cannon; MalcoJm Roberts; M. M. Roberts; O. R. Morris; Russell Jones; James Gary Roberts; Del W. Taylor; Joseph Gardner; James G. Nooner; Robert T. Brewer; Buck Simmons; Gene Wallington; Gertrude Haun; Eugene Gordon; Logan English; W. A. Ezell; Dr. Robert Moore; Baker Compton; Robert Overton; Larry Compton; Warren Petigrew; Grigsby Tansil; Tommie Jones