A Reflection of MSU
By Ed Applegate

Morehead had little to offer in 1887--no streets, no sidewalks, no churches. Perhaps it was for these reasons that its population was under 1,000.

Mrs. Phoebe Button and her son, Frank C. Button, were so inspired by Morehead's surroundings, however, they left Midway Junior College. They instituted the Morehead Normal School in their home which was located where the Adron Doran University Center now stands. Only one pupil was in attendance the first day.

The school was controlled by the Kentucky Christian Missionary Convention for 13 years. In 1900, it was placed under the control of the Christian Woman's Board of Missions, St. Louis, Mo.

The campus consisted of four buildings; three constructed of wood, while Burgess Hall was made of brick and stone, costing $10,000. All were torn down later.

Frank C. Button, after his mother died in 1892, operated the Normal School until 1911 when J. M. Robinson became principal. From 1913 to 1919, Dr. J. Wesley Hatcher occupied the principalship.

The father of Dr. Warren C. Lappin, W. O. Lappin, served as principal from 1919 until the school closed in 1922. Only three people received diplomas on that fateful day.

Two Normal Schools Sought

In 1922, Gov. Edwin Morrow signed the act of the General Assembly providing for a special commission charged with the task of locating two new normal schools. The commission recommended

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that one be located in the Eastern part of the state, while the other be in the Western section. Allie W. Young influenced the decisions of the commission's members for the Eastern school, preferring Morehead as its site.

On Sept. 23, 1923, the doors of the Morehead State Normal School opened, and Dr. Frank C. Button was the school's first president. With appropriations of $30,000 from the 1922 session of the General Assembly, Dr. Button hired an eight-member faculty, and purchased the necessary supplies. The same buildings which had formerly housed the old Normal School were used.

From three college students and 70 secondary school students, the school grew to more than 350 college students within a decade.

The first college newspaper--More-Head Light--was published in 1927. Two years later it was renamed--The Trail Blazer. The first yearbook--The Raconteur--was published in 1927 which coincided with Morehead's first graduation.

Growth Began in 20s

Dr. Button's administration saw the construction of five buildings: 1926, the old administration building (now Rader Hall) and Allie Young Hall, followed by Fields Hall and Thompson Hall in 1927. Button Auditorium was erected in 1929, and in 1930, the President's Home.

During this growing period, Morehead Normal School became Morehead State Normal School and Teachers College and was accepted as a member in the Kentucky Association of Colleges.

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In 1929, Dr. Button resigned the presidency, but acted as Chaplain and assistant field representative for a year before being named President Emeritus.

The superintendent of Maysville City Schools, Dr. John Howard Payne, became the college's second president on Aug. 1, 1929.

During the dark days of the 30's, Morehead State Normal School and Teachers College was renamed Morehead State Teachers College, and was accepted by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, the American Association of Teachers Colleges and the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association.

And, although much of the country was suffering from the depression, the growth of the school, ironically, doubled.

In 1930, the total school student body numbered 256, while the faculty totaled 22; 65 courses were being taught. By 1940, the enrollment had grown to 585. Fifty-eight members made up the faculty. Likewise, the leave program was adopted on the campus, correspondence courses were offered, off-campus teaching programs were organized, industrial arts and commerce courses were added.

"Hawg Rifle" Initiated

The "Hawg Rifle" was initiated in 1936 by the Campus Club, and Morehead grabbed possession of it that same year by defeating Eastern.

The official college fight song, Earl Senff's "Fight, Fight, Fight for Morehead," came into being, and the music department's first practice room was located in the basement of Fields Hall.

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When Dr. Payne left the presidency in 1935, Dr. William H. Vaughn served as acting president for almost a month until Dr. Harvey Babb was named as the institution's third president.

During these turbulent years, four buildings were built besides Jayne Memorial Stadium. Johnson Camden Library, named for former U.S. Sen. Johnson Camden, was constructed in 1930; the University Breckinridge School, named for Robert J. Breckinridge, the sixth state superintendent of public instruction, was completed in 1931; Lappin Hall, named in 1958 for Dr. Warren C. Lappin, was finished in 1937; and Mays Hall (formerly East Men's Hall) was constructed in 1937.

As the 40's began, Morehead State Teachers College had a new president: Dr. William H. Vaughn. The enrollment for the fall semester was 588. The school's first foreign student came from Cuba in 1941.

In 1942, the quarter system was instituted and used until 1948.

War Begin, Enrollment Drops

Male students and faculty members alike joined the armed forces and enrollment dropped to 255 in the fall of 1942. The spring of 1943-44 saw only nine male students; a record low enrollment of 166 occurred in the fall of 1944.

Between 1942 and 1944, the college facilities were used for an electrical training school which kept 600 Navy officers and trainees on the campus.

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At war's end, 1945, most of the faculty members returned. Students then enrolled under the G. I. Bill.

Morehead received its fifth president, Dr. William Jesse Baird, in 1946. Prior to his appointment, Dr. Warren C. Lappin acted as president for a little over a month.

In the fall of 1946, the enrollment was 614. The school's outlook was favorable, but in December, 1946, charges were filed with the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools against it because of political interference. The college was removed from the association's list of accredited schools.

In the fall of 1947, the enrollment fell to 435. A new Board of Regents was named by the governor and the association was convinced that the days of political interference had ended. The college was re-accredited in 1948.

Morehead State Teachers College became Morehead State College during the same year. By the end of the decade, the enrollment was nearing the 600 mark again.

The 50's began sadly for Morehead. Dr. Baird, who had taken a leave of absence on Jan. 9, 1951, for health reasons, died Feb. 19. Dr. Lappin acted as president until Dr. Charles Spain, the college's sixth president, was installed on May 28, 1951.

Doran Named Seventh President

On April 6, 1954, Dr. Spain resigned, and Dr. Adron Doran was named on the same day as the seventh president. He is currently serving his 21st year, and has been a president longer than any of
his predecessors.

The passage of the foundation program for education and the development of a sound plan for financing education aided by the passage of the general sales tax were news affecting education at all levels during the 50's.

For Morehead, the 50's showed an enormous and rapid growth in enrollment. From just over 600 students at the decade's beginning, it doubled, then tripled, then quadrupled—until it was eight times larger by the decade's end. During this period, facilities were provided for programs in business, foreign languages, music, industrial arts, home economics, and special education. Pre-forestry, pre-veterinary medicine, medical technology, nursing and philosophy were added.

In the teacher training program, off-campus student teaching and the professional semester were developed. The guidance and testing services were integrated with the total social, recreational program.

Morehead became one of the first colleges in the South to integrate. In Kentucky, it was the first state-supported college or university to have integrated dormitories.

Morehead had the first black athletes to play in the Ohio Valley Conference.

Since the enrollment had grown so quickly, the faculty increased to 160. In 1957, a director of graduate studies was named for the first time. An alumni director was named, and seven academic divisions were organized in 1960.

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Morehead received recognition as a major college in basketball by the National Collegiate Athletic Association during this period.

The athletic program hit an all-time high in 1962-63 when the football, basketball and baseball teams captured championships in the Ohio Valley Conference.

Construction Grew In 50s

Baird Music Hall became the first major structure to be built on the campus in 17 years. It was constructed in 1953, and was part of a $10 million building program which bloomed between 1953 and 1963.

Other buildings constructed were: Laughlin Fieldhouse, 1956; Doran Student House, 1957; Lakewood Terrace, 1960; Waterfield Hall, 1960; Butler Hall, 1961; Combs Classroom Building, 1961; addition to Button Auditorium, 1961; Industrial Arts and Home Economics Building, 1962; Wilson Hall, 1962; Mignon Hall, 1963; Administration Building, 1963; and 11 faculty duplexes.

A 25-bed infirmary was built during this period, as well as the purchasing of the Palmer House, a 12-room home management house. There was remodeling of numerous other buildings.

In 1964, the construction of Breathitt Sports Center and West Mignon Hall occurred.

In 1965, East Mignon Hall, Cooper Hall and the W. H. Rice Maintenance Service Building were built. WMKY, an FM radio station, began broadcasting from the Combs Building with 10 watts of power.

The Kentucky General Assembly granted university status to MSC

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in February, 1966. Five academic schools and a graduate division were formed and the first vice presidency was created. Dr. Lappin was appointed to this position in academic affairs.

Five construction projects were completed in 1967; Mignon Tower, Alumni Tower, Normal Hall, Downing Hall and Laughlin Health Building.

Morehead As Today

The Claypool-Young Art Building, Lyman V. Ginger Hall (Education Building) and the remodeled Button Gymnasium opened in 1968. The Army ROTC program was instituted the same year. Three more vice presidents were appointed: Dr. Raymond Hornback, university affairs; Dr. Morris Norfleet, research and development; and Roger L. Wilson, student affairs. The university farm, which consists of approximately 215 acres and is located five miles north of the campus, was purchased.

In 1969, W. H. Cartmell Hall and Nunn Hall were added. The Doran Student House was enlarged and renamed the Adron Doran University Center. The enrollment in the fall was 6,460.

Construction of Boyd F. Reed Hall began in 1970. Russel McClure was named vice president for fiscal affairs. The Student Council became the MSU Student Government Association.

Rader Hall was reopened in 1971 after a remarkable remodeling project. The oldest campus building was transformed into an ultra-modern classroom and office structure. WMKY began electrifying the air waves with 50,000 watts 18 hours a day.

In May, 1971, Dr. Doran received the Horatio Alger Award in New York City. He became the fourth Kentuckian so honored.

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The sixth academic school: Business and Economics, was created in 1971.

Board Changed

In 1972, the Kentucky General Assembly removed the state superintendent of public instruction from the Board of Regents, expanded the board's lay membership to eight persons and gave full voting rights to the student and faculty representatives.

By 1972, MSU's building program had produced more than $50 million worth of new facilities and had won four awards for architectural excellence since 1954.

During 1973, new courses were developed in the communications department. Morehead became the first in the state to offer a minor in environmental science. Other courses were offered in an experimental program through the state's educational television network (KET). Boyd F. Reed Hall was completed.

Mrs. Mignon Doran, the president's wife, was awarded the International Association of Personnel in Employment Security (IAPES) Humanitarian Distinguished Citizen and Devoted Public Service Award in Albuquerque, N. M. Mrs. Doran is the founder of the Personal Development Institute.

-30-