

# WOMEN AND CLEMSON UNIVERSITY



*Clemson College Library, c. 1905. Most likely the woman at the desk is Susan Hall Sloan. From 1893 to 1927, the college library was located in the Main Building, now called Tillman Hall.*



*Library employees, c. 1940. From 1927 to 1966, the college library was located in the building now called Sikes Hall.*

# *Chapter 2*

## CLEMSON WOMEN STAFF AND FACULTY



## THE EVOLVING LIBRARY STAFF

Not long after Clemson's founding, the college president also hired a woman secretary and another clerk, Miss A. Lesesne Lewis, who looked after the small library. In fact, it would be the library that first hired a woman to its professional staff. In 1903, the trustees wanted a trained librarian to oversee the growing collection. President Patrick Mell undertook the task, contacting a number of land-grant college presidents for nominations. The Nebraska College president made a nomination, and, after a great deal of correspondence, Mell hired the young woman. He informed the Board, which then indicated that it wanted a male librarian. The Board's reaction to Mell's selection of the Nebraska woman as librarian suggests that the place of origin may have been more of a stumbling block than her gender.<sup>16</sup> Whatever the case, the contract was nullified, and Mell had the burden of informing the young woman. The existing secretary, Susan Hall Sloan, who began service in 1902, continued as the librarian until she resigned on December 9, 1905.<sup>17</sup>

Unable to find a male librarian, Richard Wright Simpson, president of the Board of Trustees, asked the Board to hire Katharine B. Trescot, a South Carolinian and daughter of a Clemson supporter.<sup>18</sup> So the first woman professional joined the staff on December 18, 1905. It is doubtful that the cadets made a distinction among the women who were clerical staff, matrons, and professionals. Whatever the case, the students called Katharine Trescot "the goddess of wisdom."<sup>19</sup>

After she retired in 1925, Trescot was replaced by Marguerite Verity Doggett who would stay until 1932, when Cornelia A. Graham took up the post. Graham was the only professional woman in the college, the sole teaching faculty woman having resigned in 1930. Graham would be alone until 1943 when Elizabeth Epting joined the faculty as an instructor in French and English. (Elizabeth was the wife of Carl Lafayette Epting, professor of history and political science.)<sup>20</sup> Graham retired in 1953, and Mr. J. W. G. Gourlay from Canada took her place.

Before World War II ended, several women were employed for the library. Single women, mainly on the library staff, roomed in the Clemson Hotel, a large L-shaped wooden structure standing close by what is now the Clemson House. Ernest "Whitey" Lander, at the time a young faculty

member in social sciences, called the hotel a "matrimony factory," due to the number of bachelors who found future brides there. Whitey met Sara "Tish" Shirley there in 1946, and they were married in 1947.<sup>21</sup> Tish Lander was a Clemson College librarian. With only two men working at the library, the majority of its staff were women.

Today, some fifty years later, with the library now in the Robert Muldrow Cooper building, the Special Collections and university archives in the Strom Thurmond Institute, and the Gunning Library in the Rudolph Lee Architecture complex, the collection has grown to well over 1.5 million titles. The staff is now composed of seventy-two persons, of whom fifty-eight are women. Forty-seven of these women are Caucasian, and eleven are African American. The Libraries also have sixty-five support staff of whom nearly fifty are women. In the long-standing tradition of Clemson's library, they ably serve the faculty and students.



*[Left] Katharine B. Trescot, c. 1906; [top right] Marguerite V. Doggett and colleagues, 1931; [lower right] Cornelia A. Graham and colleagues, 1935.*

## CLEMSON'S WOMEN FACULTY

The first woman faculty member, Mary Hart Evans, was appointed Assistant Professor of Botany in 1918. She later married Professor William Aull. In the same year, Rosamund Walcott came to Clemson from Cornell to replace her brother who left to go to war. She taught architecture, but soon went into private practice.<sup>22</sup> Mabel Stehle of Columbus, Ohio, and a graduate of Ohio State University, joined the faculty to teach entomology and French.<sup>23</sup> Several years later, Cleo Dobson Aull was appointed as an instructor of French, and in 1925, Sue M. Fitzpatrick was hired to teach mathematics.<sup>24</sup>

As had been the case in the 1920s, the women who joined the faculty in the 1950s were wives of men employed at Clemson. Patricia Kneas Hill, for example, was the wife of Henry Hill, a staff member in the college business office. Hill had received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Vassar and her master's in European history from the University of Pennsylvania. First a member of the English department and then the Social Sciences department at Clemson, she taught the European and United States history surveys, courses taken by most of the students who considered her to be thorough. Hill continued her studies in the late 1960s, receiving her Ph.D. in Tudor and Stuart history from the University of Georgia. A strong scholar who wrote several well-regarded books on younger members of the English and Scottish royal and noble families, Hill was promoted to professor of history and taught upper division and graduate courses in British history.

Ruby Davis, who joined the faculty one year after Hill, was also in the Social Sciences department. Her husband, Cecil, was a faculty member in the College of Industrial Management and Textile Science. Davis received both her bachelor's and master's degrees in United States history from the University of Georgia. Like Hill, she taught the United States and European surveys. She was a fine teacher and beloved by her students. Susan Brown, another 1950s female instructor in social sciences, was



*Mary Hart Evans Aull*



*Rosamund Walcott, c. 1918*



*Patricia Kneas Hill*



*[Front row, left to right] Susan H. Brown, Ruby S. Davis, and May S. Ringold with their Department of Social Sciences colleagues, 1958.*



*Harriet R. W. Holman*



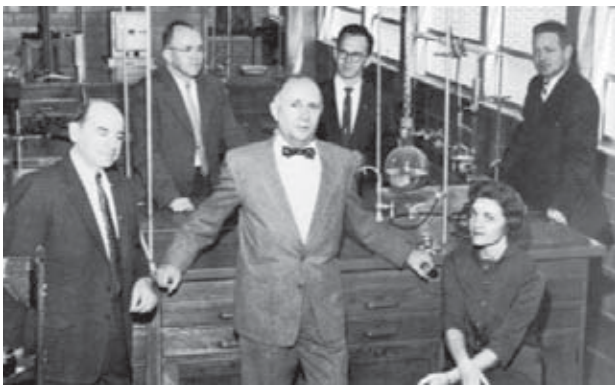
*Carol Bleser*



*Elizabeth Galloway*

a lawyer with her Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Georgia. Brown taught economics and business law and commuted daily from Anderson, her hometown. Sue Dunkle became a Mathematical Sciences faculty member in the late 1950s. She earned her Bachelor's degree from Southwest Louisiana Institute,<sup>25</sup> and she held master's degrees from the University of Texas and Columbia University. Virginia Cole Skelton was the first woman to graduate, having taken all her course work at Clemson. As soon as she graduated, she was hired as a chemistry instructor.<sup>26</sup> These ten women, representing some two percent of the faculty, were the real beginning at Clemson of instruction by women faculty.

Among the earliest of these faculty to hold a Ph.D. upon arrival was Harriett R. W. Holman, a professor of English, from Anderson, South Carolina. Her education included a B.A. from Winthrop, an M.A. from Michigan, a Ph.D. from Duke, and further study, in 1955, at Oxford University. Having come to Clemson from Erskine College in 1960, Holman was well published, with five books on Southern literary figures, fourteen articles, and many entries in encyclopedias and bibliographies. At about the same time, May Spencer Ringold, an historian, joined the faculty. Promoted to professor of Southern history in 1962, she worked to build the college library and published widely.<sup>27</sup> In an important 1983 milestone, Elizabeth Galloway, College of Education, was chosen as Clemson's first female Alumni Distinguished Professor. Three years later, Carol Bleser, a highly regarded Southern historian, was brought to Clemson from Colgate as the Katherine and Calhoun Lemon Professor of History, the first woman titled professor. A graduate of Converse College, Bleser had earned a doctorate from Columbia University.<sup>28</sup> Her publications averaged a book a



*Virginia Cole Skelton with her Department of Chemistry colleagues, 1958.*



*In 1958, the Department of Mathematics included [left to right] Louise G. Fulmer, Sara G. Loy, and Sue K. Dunkle.*

year, and in 1988, to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the wedding of Anna Maria Calhoun and Thomas Green Clemson, Bleser organized a brilliant symposium on Southern women prior to the American Civil War, the papers of which were published by Oxford University Press as *In Joy and In Sorrow*. Eighth Clemson President, Robert Cook Edwards, and his wife, Louise, gave the financial support for the conference. Leading scholars throughout the world assembled on the Fort Hill grounds for the event.

## WIDENING FACULTY FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Several factors led to the increase of Clemson University's women faculty and its prestige. In 1964 the institution's purpose changed from a technological college to a broad-based, state-assisted university. Part of that change led to the growing number of women faculty and students in English, History, and Horticulture. Soon, the same was true for the faculties of the new majors traditionally open to women: education (with kindergarten, elementary, and secondary teaching emphases), medical technology, and nursing.<sup>29</sup> The first associate degree in nursing was in 1965, and the bachelor's program was added in 1968 with the first degree granted in 1972. By 1975, the master's degree in nursing was added. Medical technology, also attractive to women, was added in May of 1964.<sup>30</sup>

In addition, women were encouraged to enter the fields of mathematics, biological sciences, and engineering. However recent national statistics on persons receiving the doctoral degree indicate that, even though women received 45.3% of those degrees awarded in 2004, only 17.6% were in engineering, while 26.4% were in physical sciences, 35.9% in business, 49.4% were in the life sciences, 51.8% in humanities, 55.1% in social sciences, and 65.7% in education. The availability of women faculty in scientific and technological fields has been one of several factors contributing to the challenges in broadening the diversity of the professorate.

## FACULTY, STAFF, AND COLLEGE FACTS

By 1958, the number of women faculty had grown to eight, and by 1963, it had doubled to seventeen, about three percent of the total faculty. A great change had become apparent by 1974 when 105 women formed twelve percent of Clemson's faculty. This growth was in response to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, an increased availability, and heightened recruiting of female faculty. Just about two decades later, in 1996, Clemson University had 303 women faculty members, representing twenty-two percent of the total. By 2005, women constituted thirty-one percent of the 1,258 persons who held faculty rank. Nationwide, by comparison, women constituted thirty-seven percent of postsecondary institutions' faculties.<sup>31</sup>

To clarify the recent percentages given above, it may be helpful to review Clemson University's 2005 faculty and staff by its colleges and large administrative blocks. For example, as mentioned earlier, the Clemson Libraries' total staff includes seventy-two people, fifty-eight of whom are women. On the other hand, the on- and off-campus divisions' staff of the College of Agriculture, Forestry, and Life Sciences number 200 men and fifty-three women. The College of Architecture, Arts, and Humanities has 158 men and 121 women among its 279 faculty. It also employs eleven men and forty-one women on its staff. In the College of Business and Behavioral Science, only forty-six of its 168 faculty members are women, while its staff consists of nine men and thirty-nine women. Engineering and Sciences is made up of eighty-three women and 305 men. Only nine women in this college are full professors while 117 full professors are men. It should be noted that the staff in this college includes a professional staff of 114 women and eighty-three men. Clemson's fifth college, Health, Education, and Human Development, has a majority of women faculty: ninety-



three women and sixty-two men. This college employs eighty-seven women and thirty-three men on its staff.

Within Academic Affairs, Computing and Information Technology includes eighty-nine women and 104 men scattered through the main campus and at the Clemson Research Park on Wild Hog Road. In addition, the university's academic administration employs seven women and seven men at the faculty level and ninety-one women and nine men on the staff.

## DISTINGUISHED WOMEN FACULTY



An interesting way to track the recognition of Clemson's women faculty is through the history of their leadership in the Faculty Senate. For example, it was not until 1971 that Corrine Sawyer, Professor of English, was elected President of the Faculty Senate. A highly regarded teacher and author of numerous scholarly papers and a series of mystery novels, Sawyer became Director of the Honors Council and chair of the University Scholarship and Awards Committee in 1972. She held those posts until 1982 when, with colleague Robert Snelsire, Professor of Engineering, Sawyer expanded Snelsire's Engineering minority recruitment program to the entire campus. Holley Ulbrich, Alumni Distinguished Professor of Economics, was the next woman to be elected President of the Faculty Senate in 1983-1984. A Senior Fellow of the Strom Thurmond Institute, Ulbrich is widely known for her work in public policy analysis. In 1998-1999, Patricia (Pat) Smart, Professor of Nursing and Interim Coordinator of Graduate studies, became Faculty Senate President. Most recently she has been a member of the central administration working with the University President's office and with the Provost. Connie Lee, Professor of Nursing, served as the Faculty Senate President in 2005-2006 and coincidentally was the first non-Caucasian to do so. Succeeding her in 2006-2007 is Mary Elizabeth (Beth) Kunkel, Professor of Food Science and Human Nutrition. This also marks the first time two women have been elected in succession to lead the Faculty Senate.



*Women Faculty Senate Presidents [top to bottom]: Corrine Sawyer (1971-72); Holley Ulbrich (1983-84); Pat Smart (1998-99); Beth Kunkel (2006-07), receiving the gavel from Connie Lee.*

An equally interesting mini-history of our women faculty's status can be discovered in prestigious, on- and off-campus recognitions they have received for their research, teaching, service, and leadership. At the university level, for example, the Clemson Alumni Association and the Clemson Class of 1934 sponsor a total of nineteen Alumni Distinguished Professorships. Seven women have been named as Alumni Distinguished Professors: Elizabeth Galloway, Professor of Education, 1983; Holley Ulbrich, Professor of Economics, 1987; E. Cecilia Voelker, Professor of Art and Architecture History, 1989; Helene M. Riley, Professor of German, 1996; Patricia Connor-Greene, Pro-

fessor of Psychology, 1998; Mary Haque, Professor of Horticulture, 2000; and Melanie Cooper, Professor of Chemistry, 2001.

Only two women faculty have been chosen by the Faculty Senate and the Class of '39 to receive the prestigious Class of '39 Award of Excellence. In fact, in 1989, Dixie Goswami, Professor Emeritus of English and Senior Scholar of the Strom Thurmond Institute, became the first Class of '39 recipient. Internationally known for directing the program in writing at the Bread Loaf School of English (Middlebury College, Vermont) and for co-directing the Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network, which has been highly successful throughout the United States and the United Kingdom, Goswami has received a number of national awards and appointments. In 1999, a second outstanding woman on the Clemson faculty received the Class of '39 Award for Excellence: Judith Melton, Professor of German and Women's Studies, who chaired the Department of Languages for nine years and who now serves as Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Director of Human Resources of the College of Architecture, Arts, and Humanities.



*Dixie Goswami*



*Judy Melton*



*Mickey Harder*



*Karen Burg*

It is, of course, impossible to review all of the awards that our women faculty have received from their departments, colleges, and the university, as well as from regional, national, and international organizations. That deluge of recognitions proves that women on our faculty are not only doing exceptional work, but they also are providing exceptional leadership. One obvious example is Lillian "Mickey" Harder, concert pianist and professor of music, who directs the Brooks Center for the Performing Arts, which annually presents forty to forty-five professional musical and theatrical performances. These range from the Shanghai String Quartet to the Chamber Orchestra of St. Martin's in the Field (London). At the same time some 1,500 Clemson University students perform annually at the Brooks Center. Harder's manifold contributions have enriched the lives of Clemson's faculty, staff, and students, as well as the greater community, including 14,000 school children. In recognition of her cultural leadership, Harder has received a number of awards, including the 2002 Elizabeth O'Neill Verner Governor's Award for Individual Achievement in the Arts.

Other outstanding women on Clemson's faculty include Patricia (Patti) Connor-Greene, an Alumni Distinguished Professor of Psychology, who in 1998 received the Governor's Professor of the Year award. In 1999, she received the Governor's Professor of the Year award and was named the Carnegie Foundation/CASE South Carolina Professor of the Year. Six years later, Karen Burg, Hunter Chair and Professor of Bioengineering, was named a (U.S.) Presidential Scholar for her research in bioengineering. Joining Burg among the ninety-eight scholar researchers (chosen nationwide) were two other Clemson faculty members: Martine LaBarge, Chair and Professor of Bioengineering, and Anthony Guiseppi-Elie, Dow Chemical Professor and Director of the Center for Bioelectronics, Biosensors, and Biochips. Also in 2005, Pamela (Pam) Mack, Professor of History, received the prestigious Joseph H. Hazen Prize in Education, which is an international competition that honors teaching excellence as well as important pedagogical innovations in teaching the history of science.

## PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Clemson University's women faculty and staff have an important advocate in the President's Commission on the Status of Women. The "Women's Commission," as it is usually called, was established in 1994 by President Max Lennon who charged it with "making a difference, not collecting a lot of information and issuing a report." Lennon also recognized that "[t]his commission has the opportunity to make a real difference in this institution, comparable to the difference made by individuals who had the vision to bring about peaceful desegregation." As Carol Bleser, Lemon Professor of History and first chair of the commission, observed, "By creating this commission and giving it the authority of his office, President Lennon is making a statement about the need for changes that will allow Clemson women to become leaders, problem-solvers and innovators."

From the start, the commission has tackled barriers to equal opportunities for women at Clemson, and it has done so by addressing such issues as salaries; hiring, tenure, promotion, and job classification policies; sexual discrimination and harassment; health benefits; and special training for women with special needs and/or in lower-grade jobs. And the commission has not only carefully monitored Clemson's women, but also compared their status to that of women in other universities and colleges. For example, in a 2003 study of Clemson as a workplace (which included thirty-five all-public, mostly land-grant universities), Brenda Van Der May noted that Clemson had strong support for the resolution of sexual harassment but needed to address further its work environment for women and tenure delays for them as a group. That study concluded that Clemson is average or slightly below average as a workplace environment. In contrast, a recent international study of workplace teaching and research environments ranked Clemson University first in the United States.

Such studies are important. Equally important are the annual awards with which the President's Commission honors individuals who have made outstanding contributions to improving the status of Clemson women. Each spring since his inauguration in 2000, President Jim Barker and Marcia Barker have handed out these awards. The categories of the four Outstanding Women awards include academic faculty, classified staff, graduate student, and undergraduate student. More recently the commission has added two awards. To date, the only three recipients of the Distinguished Contributor Award have been Doris K. Helms, Provost and Professor of Biology (2000); Almeda Jacks, Vice President for Student Affairs (2005); and Dr. Thomas M. Keinath, Dean of the College of Engineering and Science (2006). Also in 2006, Kelly Boyd was the first Clemson student to receive the Thea McCrary Student Award for Outstanding Service.

## WOMEN'S COMMISSION STAFF AWARDS

It is useful to remember that women on the staff have served Clemson's faculty and students in important ways since 1893. However, only since 1994 have numerous women staff been cited for excellence by the Women's Commission. The 1994 Outstanding Women Staff Award recipients were Captain Thea McCrary, Clemson University Police Department, and Janie C. Dillon, Assistant to Dean, College of Sciences. The next year's staff winners were Barbara Kennedy-Dixon, Director, Student-Athlete Enrichment Program, and Jennifer Arblaster, Account Technician Supervisor, in Animal, Dairy and Veterinary Sciences. One woman was chosen in 1996—Dianne Haselton, Computer Programmer III/Data Mgt. Research Analyst, in the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics—while two were honored in 1997: Elsie B. Wilson, Administrative Coordinator, Office of the President, and Johnanna Rice, Custodial Services. The 1998 and 1999 staff award winners were, respectively, Betty L. Newton, Curator II, Department of Geological Sciences, and Valerie R. Ramsey, Fiscal Analyst III, College of HEHD. Two other outstanding staff recipients were Cathy Toth Sturkie, Secretary to the Faculty Senate (2000), and Altheia Lesley Richardson, Director of the



*President and Mrs. Marcia Barker with [above left, center] Elisa K. Sparks, Associate Professor of English, Women's Studies Program Director, and 2005 Women's Commission Faculty Award winner; and [above right, center] Serita Acker, Women in Science and Engineering Program Coordinator, 2005 Women's Commission Staff Award winner.*



*[Left] President Barker and Syd Cross with the Women's Commission 2006 winners [identified from right to left], Tom Keinath, Julie Eggert, Kathy Woodard, Courtney DeBruin, and Kelly Boyd. [Right] Cathy Toth Sturkie, Secretary to the Faculty Senate and 2000 Women's Commission Staff Award winner.*



Gantt Center for Multicultural Affairs (2001). During the following three years, Eartha L. White, Student Services Coordinator, Graduate School (2002); Helena C. Douglas, Executive Director, Office of Off-Campus, Distance, and Continuing Education (2003); and Linda Law, Advisor, General Engineering (2004) received the outstanding staff awards. Most recently honored have been Serita Acker, Coordinator of the Women in Science and Engineering Program (2005), and Kathy Woodard, Director of Planning & Research in the Public Service Alliance and coordinator of the Clemson University Service Alliance (2006).

## WOMEN'S COMMISSION FACULTY AWARDS

Since the President's Commission on the Status of Women was established, thirteen women on Clemson's faculty have been selected for the Outstanding Academic Faculty Woman Award. Their wide-ranging fields of study and their leadership attest to the status of women on Clemson's campus. The first six of these scholars and leaders are as follows: Elham B. Makram, Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering (1994); Lillian Utsey "Mickey" Harder, Professor of Music (1995); Uma V. Sridharan, as Professor of Finance (1996); Judith M. Melton, Professor of German and Women's Studies (1997); Carol K. Bleser, Lemon Distinguished Professor of U.S. History (1998); and Lolly Tai, Professor of Planning and Landscape Architecture (1999). The first winners in the new millenium were Sydney Cross, Professor of Art, College of AAH (2000); Martine LaBerge, Professor of Bioengineering (2001); Patricia A. Zungoli, Professor of Entomology (2002); Karen J. L. Burg, Professor of Bioengineering (2003); Melanie M. Cooper, Professor of Chemistry (2004); Elisa Sparks, Associate Professor of English and Director of Women's Studies Program (2005); and Julie Eggert, Assistant Professor of Nursing (2006).