

Boyd returns to Eugene for inauguration



William Boyd

Photo by Bob Baker

By SALLY HODGKINSON
Of the Emerald

The title "University president" no longer precedes William Boyd's name. Also gone are the dark circles below his eyes, the deep lines etched in his forehead and the tension that hung about him like faint perfume.

Fifteen months after a worn-out man gladly left the University presidency for less tension and more money, Bill Boyd, citizen, arrives as a relaxed, easy-going visitor to the University.

"I miss the place but not the job.

"When I left, I was very tired. I'm certainly more rested now — I'm entirely rested now. I have a job that is not characterized by the same kinds of pressure at all.

"I have a job in which my concerns are always months ahead, so I don't have that kind of intense relationship to day to day activities that a university president has. It's much less demanding in terms of nervous energy. And it's nervous energy that is so tiring."

Memories — good and bad — are part of Boyd's visit. But the pressure of the athletic scandal is someone else's headache. The agonizing budget cuts aren't felt in Racine, Wisc.

All the attention is on recently inaugurated Pres. Paul Olum. Boyd prefers it that way. Olum is the reason he's in town.

"I don't think I'm at all sentimental, but I take a lot of pleasure in seeing old colleagues, and I take enormous pleasure in the fact that Paul is being inaugurated. After all, I brought him to the University, and I have a special sense of pride about that.

"I have every confidence that he will be a superb president."

Boyd says he and Olum operated the University as a "virtual partnership" from 1976 to 1980.

"Paul and I were very close partners when I was here and I don't have a sense that he's going to go about things very differently. After all, how I did things was very much influenced by Paul."

But there are differences between the two. Olum is more sociable, open; Boyd is more

private, tense. Those differences influence Olum's reactions to the pressures of the presidency, Boyd says.

"Paul is his own man. He's a sociable person. I think he talks more easily than I do and finds it easier to share. Those are personal characteristics that will influence the administration in a favorable way."

Despite immense budget pressure, Olum seems to enjoy the office, Boyd says.

"I think he's holding up beautifully under pressure. He's got that lean and hungry look that is the mark of the office.

"Look at him," Boyd says, gesturing. Olum, while laughing with a faculty member, pauses to check his watch. The inauguration is less than an hour away. "He's very much at ease," says Boyd.

Boyd says he hasn't kept in touch with friends at the University. "I have honorable intentions, but I'm not a good correspondent."

Racine is a long way from Eugene. And the presidency of the Johnson Foundation is a lot different than the University presidency.

As president, Boyd oversees an foundation that develops programs, seminars and symposiums on arms control, the physical, social and cultural environment, education and race relations.

Higher education is an issue the Johnson Foundation dabbles in, but Boyd says the foundation's emphasis on education is switching from higher to secondary.

"As a national priority, secondary education is a more urgent need. We rely on high schools to socialize a whole body of citizens.

"The high schools are not succeeding, and we're moving into an area where we are suffering from civic illiteracy, of citizens who aren't well enough informed to perform their duties as citizens."

It's a long way from Racine to Eugene — in terms of time, issues and priorities as well as distance.

But, for a weekend, Bill Boyd is back in town. And as he steps out into the sunny fall day, he remembers some of the good.

"It looks as lovely as I remember it."

Olum joins a long line of University presidents

By DAWN GARCIA
Of the Emerald

It's been more than 200 years since John Wesley Johnson, the University's first president, opened the campus — consisting solely of Deady Hall — to 177 students and five faculty members.

Between that day in October, 1876, and Sunday's inauguration of Pres. Paul Olum in 1981, the University has seen numerous generations of students, the fading of rigid 19th century discipline, the new zaniness of the Roaring Twenties, the sobering Great Depression, two world wars, a commercial age, the Vietnam war, the present computer era — and 13 University presidents.

And yet, the main goal for the University remains intact: to educate students.

Just how to do this has been highly disputed. Each University president used his experiences, his personality and the mood of the times to mold the University a bit differently than his predecessors did.

The ferocious morality of the late 1800s and his patriarchal personality caused Johnson, the pioneer president, to rule over a school that demanded its students to study diligently, conduct themselves in a discreet and proper manner and never drink, smoke or stay

out past 11 p.m.

Failure to abide by these and other "Rules for the Government of the Students" meant expulsion from the University. Social dancing and roller skating were even considered inappropriate.

The school concentrated on textbook-learning of Greek and Latin, although law, medicine, music and art were added under Johnson's reign. Essentially, Johnson steered the University through its shaky first 17 years not through innovation, but by his understanding of Oregonians' suspicion of higher education. He established the school as a moral, educational institution.

Under Charles Hiram Chapman, the second University president, the school grew out of its identity as a college serving only Eugene and Lane County. The University truly became a state institution as it gained statewide support and recognition through Chapman's influence in intellectual and legislative circles.

However, it was this change and others instituted by Chapman that caused the Eugene Guard newspaper to attack him as a dictator and a radical. He attempted and successfully established the lecture system, the elective system and generally liberalized education at the University. Petitions to the

Board of Regents criticized his unorthodox views on higher education; eventually some demanded that he be removed from office.

"The person bearing the worst reputation for truth and veracity is Dr. Chapman, its (the University) president, who is a polished flatterer and adroit intriguer," accused one member of the community in a letter to the Guard.

After much discussion, the board voted unanimously to ignore the petitions, but opposition to Chapman continued to grow in the University community as he questioned popular ideas.

Succeeding presidents began to shape the University to their ideas, though not as radical as Chapman's. Frank Strong, president from 1899 to 1902, was credited with establishing departments with deans. Strong also increased the size as well as importance of the campus library.

According to University historians, one of the most popular and successful presidents was Prince Lucien Campbell, nicknamed "Good Prince Campbell" by University students. During his 23-year term, he effectively handled the ever-present budget problems by persuading the legislature to increase the University's funding year by year. The University,

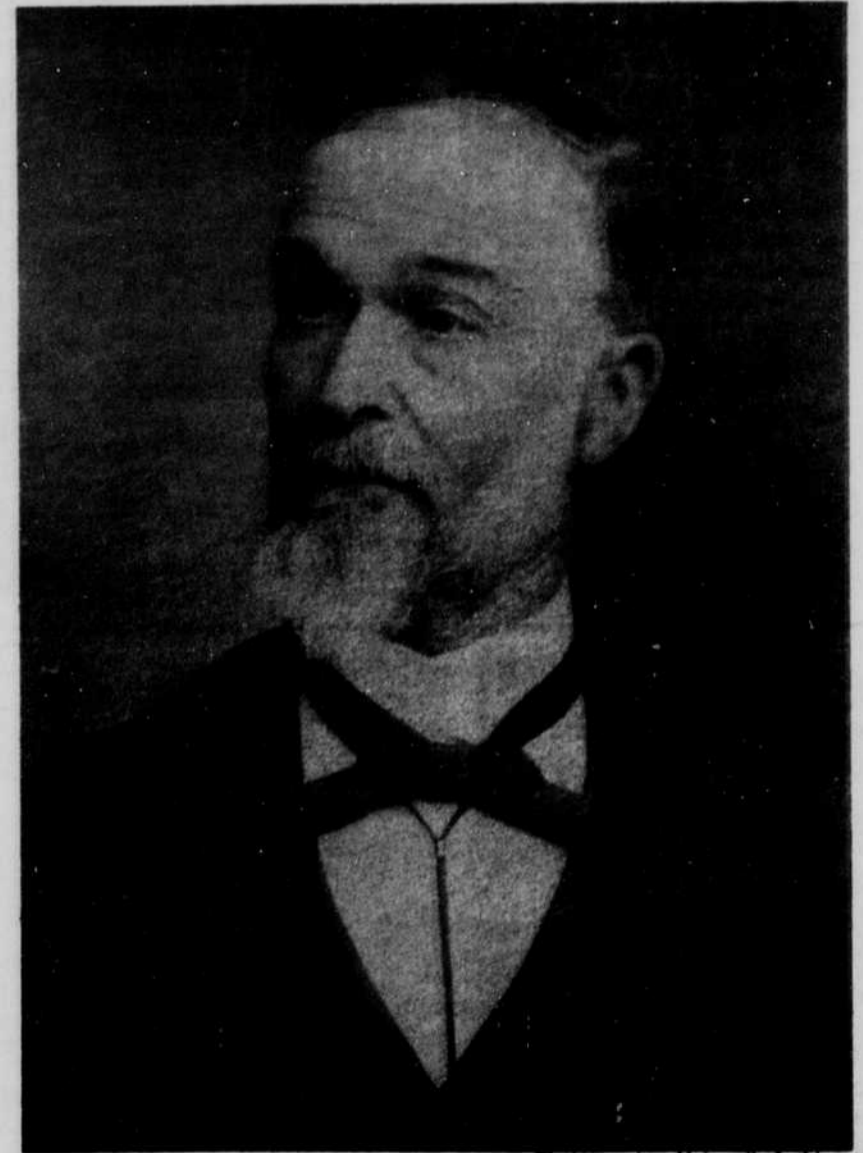


Photo courtesy University Archives

John Wesley Johnson

then just a small educational institution, gained national recognition under his guidance.

The tight money situation, a reality not one University president escaped, shadowed Arnold Bennett Hall's inauguration in 1926, the year of

Oregon's golden anniversary. The presidents who followed Hall — Clarence Boyer, Donald Erb, Harry Newburn, O. Meredith Wilson, Arthur Flemming, Robert Clark and William Boyd — have all fought inflation and frugal state legislatures.