

## Class of 1977 History

**By Lori Cramp**

During our years at F&M, the U.S. completed its withdrawal from the controversial Vietnam War. We witnessed Watergate, Nixon's resignation and Carter's pardon for draft evaders. The minimum wage was a lofty \$1.60 per hour but you were thrilled to earn that because temporary jobs were hard to find. A Chrysler Cordoba, with "rich Corinthian leather", sold for a bargain \$5,300. We expressed outrage, as the first oil crisis drove gas prices from \$0.38 to \$0.55 per gallon in *just one year*.

The college application process was a relatively easy one for us compared to what our children go through today. We generally took the SAT only once and without the benefit of comprehensive prep courses. Then we applied to perhaps one to three colleges – sometimes without even visiting the schools. But we were lucky. We landed at F&M pre-Med, pre-Law or just pre-Life and obtained a quality liberal arts education, while learning about each other and ourselves.

Of course, we were not all about our education and studies. When we arrived, we scoured the "Pig Book" trying to find the best looking guys and girls. Women were still relatively new on campus and the odds were decidedly in their favor. The Library was a place for socializing, for seeing and being seen, as much as it was for studying and conducting research. The three-sided quad was the preferred site for massive streaking, Frisbee throwing, water balloon fights, impromptu wrestling matches and the annual Fummers' Market. There were no sororities. But frats and their parties were a big part of our social life. For entertainment, we watched campus movies and Green Room productions. We enjoyed the release of Star Wars, Rocky, One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, Annie Hall, Deliverance and Jaws – starring F&M's own Roy Scheider.

All that activity made us hungry. So, some of us gained the "Freshman 15" by eating Saga's desserts, when the entrée wasn't to our liking or by patronizing Dino the Hoagie Man, the House of Pizza, or Good 'n Plenty. We also enjoyed libations from Hildy's. We drank single serving coffee from campus vending machines and didn't use terms like latte or grande.

We had our own insider's language, however, that most of us remember to this day, including throat, the stacks, cake courses, the Protest Tree, the Diplodome, and New Dorm. We waited our turn to use the single hall telephone for weekly, phone calls home and conversed while attached to a cord usually sitting on the hallway floor.

Music was a huge, defining part of our lives. We enjoyed ours played on vinyl, with turntables and the biggest, best set of speakers we could afford. In no particular order we listened to The Beatles, The Eagles, Aztec Two Step, Linda Ronstadt, Joni Mitchell, Fleetwood Mac, Eric Clapton, The Allman Brothers, the Grateful Dead, Led

Zeppelin, the Sontes, Traffic, pink Floyd, the Steve Miller Band, ELO and so many more.

We sported fabulous afros, and long hair. We wore Topsiders and Aviator sunglasses, turquoise jewelry and khakis or jeans. Our basketball uniforms were *short* – not almost ankle length, like today's. And for formal affairs, our tuxedos came in different colors, not just black and grey and our tuxedo shirts were probably ruffled.

Finally, who can forget the endless construction we endured, as Hartman Hall became Hartman Green, as East Hall was razed and a giant mud hole took its place before the Steinman College Center emerged in time for our senior year. The alumni from the class of 1977 are proud and excited that our alma mater continues to evolve and improve just as we young, vibrant 50-somethings!