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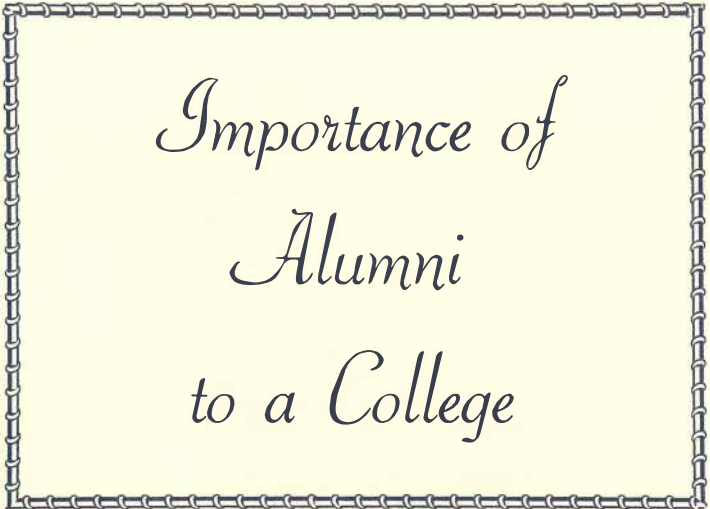
Journals and Campus Publications

8-1952

Vol. 28, No. 2 | August 1952

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Alumni
to a College*

by

HAROLD B. BRUMBAUGH

Bulletin of Bridgewater College

BRIDGEWATER COLLEGE BULLETIN

Entered as second class matter at the postoffice at
Bridgewater, Va., under Act of Congress of August 24,
1912. Published bi-monthly by Bridgewater College.

VOL. XXVIII

August, 1952

No. 2

IMPORTANCE OF ALUMNI TO A COLLEGE*

by

HAROLD B. BRUMBAUGH

Your good institution has many times entertained members of the Juniata family; the Ellises, the Brumbaughs, the Wills, the Kiracofes, the Glicks, the Mays, the Fikes, and it was easy for me to succumb to the sweet entreaty of "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny." So . . . George Washington, so Robert E. Lee, so Pocahontas, Rufus King, Warren Bowman, Danny Geiser, and Dean Boitnott . . . I am here.

My assignment is to make you as college alumni feel important. What I ought to do is talk about how Bridgewater, as a college, has provided you with many tools for your life: the profession in which you engage; the general cultivation that enables you forever to understand anything that can be explained; and the pastimes, avocations and spiritual outlets which enable you to find relaxation and the satisfaction of a *fuller* life.

The relation between the college and its alumni has been likened to a two way street. The flow should not always be in one direction. On one hand you have gained unmeasurable benefits. On the other hand you have an obligation to return some good to your alma

* This address by Harold B. Brumbaugh was given at the first annual Bridgewater alumni retreat on the Bridgewater College campus August 29 and 30, 1952. Some thirty officers and directors of the national and local chapter groups met to discuss college and alumni interests. Mr. Brumbaugh served as a guest resource person and gave the concluding address of the retreat, the subject of this booklet. Mr. Brumbaugh has been assistant to the president at Juniata College since 1936. In addition he has been alumni secretary since 1939. A graduate of Juniata, he has gained national recognition in American Alumni Council activities.

mater. She needs students, funds, buildings, books, good will, publicity, and a host of friends to interpret the personality of the institution to the public. This support you have to give is inseparable from the achievements of the college. That is how important it is. So, that is how important you are.

Now in order to accomplish these ends we need to organize ourselves to perpetuate and to impliment our college loyalties. This is really not hard to do because American college folk just naturally display a desire to form an association. The one thing that binds all men and women who once went to, or are going to Bridgewater College is the sentimental regard they hold for this college. But it does not mean that you are a homogeneous company. You are a collection or aggregation of individuals and you are independently minded. But you do have the desire to identify yourself with this group. I think you share pride in your college.

This desire varies with different individuals. Alumni can be classified into these three catagories:

1. Those who are disinterested or vaguely hostile.
2. Those who glory in their connection with the college but for some reason or other just never get around to doing any good, and
3. Those who really work for its advancement.

I am sure that all of you here are in this third category and it is your task to see that this tribe increases. Here, I would like to be specific about some things you can do. First of all, you can convert your children, your parents, brothers, sisters, cousins, aunts, and uncles. You can make other Bridgewater (and even Blue Ridge and Daleville) alumni aware of their obligation to B.C. and hence to the world.

You can keep yourself informed about the activities and progress of the college. You can visit the campus, attend class reunions and go to local chapter dinners. You can help to promote campus activities like music, dramatic and athletic organizations. You can give financial support even if it is your last loose dollar. You can recommend and encourage good students to go to Bridgewater. You can assist in finding jobs for her graduates. You can correct misunderstandings. You can interpret the college to your local church, school, and community. All of this is grist for the mill.

You can have an interest in and a capacity to do some of these things better than others, and in the doing of them, the experience is more rewarding if your efforts are combined with others. Organization helps. Local chapters can become great assets to a college. At Juniata we endeavor to maintain our nineteen local associations for pure social purposes. Quite often an overly enthusiastic president or secretary will try to turn the meeting into a fund raising vehicle but this will do more harm than good. Approximately twelve hundred of our alumni and friends will attend our dinners each year and if they leave these meetings with a feeling that they have had a good time, they will be more inclined to give real service to the college when opportunities are presented. At this point, I have some pet ideas about local association affairs and wish to pass them on.

1. Meetings should be held in places of a standard commensurate with the standing of the institution.
2. The meetings should not last too long; not more than an hour and twenty minutes. There should be no more than two speeches, and the feature one should

not exceed 25 minutes. A second speech should not be more than 8 minutes.

3. Treat your college representatives with dignity and courtesy. I am not referring to the alumni secretary necessarily because he is one of you.

4. Give newcomers a good welcome and make them feel at home.

5. Plan early and enlist the services of enough committees to assure a smooth running evening.

6. Arrange in advance for personnel at speakers table. Inform these people before hand that they are at the table so there will be no misunderstanding.

7. Arrange in advance for other details such as table decorations, invocation, recognition of special guests, music and piano for group singing, registration, handling of tickets or collection of money for dinners, tips, identification badges, display of banners and pennants.

8. Arrange for good publicity to build up interest in the dinner. Give the local papers the names of newly elected officers.

9. Keep the requirements for business to a minimum. I know it may not be democratic but have election of officers and business matters settled by committees before hand. Let the retiring president become chairman of of the nominating committee.

10. Invite the college president at least once in three years. Let the college pay the expenses of travel for the representatives from the campus, but,

11. Try to maintain your own chapter expenses such as paying for notices sent out, complimentary dinners, etc. Perhaps 25¢-50¢ extra on cost per plate will cover these items. This is better than passing the hat.

It is important to keep these local chapters active because they keep alive the sentimental interests in the college through personal contacts.

In a similar way I could dwell on class organizations as offering advantages to both alumni and the college in this mutual relationship. Alumni activities built around class units will function effectively if these classes, while they were students on the campus, felt a unified class spirit.

You can be important to your college through the medium of publicity. Here is an area where, generally speaking, I believe that our Church of the Brethren colleges have neglected. Until recent years our college administrators have not appreciated the value of an effective public relations program. Publicity is fundamentally good reporting of reportable events and functions. Newsworthy events occur in all colleges. The American public loves to read and hear about what happens on college campuses. You can help your college publicity director by furnishing him with newsworthy items. You can serve him by:

1. Establishing friendly relationships with newspaper editors, society editors, radio station managers, etc.
2. Clip local news items on Bridgewater and Bridgewater people and send to Alumni Office.
3. Try to get pictures and stories of outstanding students going to Bridgewater. Stories should be published on students winning scholarships, athletes in any field, or students prominent in any other activities such as dramatics, music, school paper, Hi-Y.
4. Get stories into high school papers about progress of their students at Bridgewater.

5. If Bridgewater is not mentioned in sports reports—radio or newspaper—get in touch with the person in charge and let him know there is a demand for it.

I am sure that all of you have followed with interest the athletic achievements of Bob Richards. But have you done anything to let your local papers know about his Bridgewater connections? Right now at Juniata we are having a great time trying to capitalize on one of our June grads who became Miss Pennsylvania.

You are important to your college for student recruiting. You might think that the request to alumni for help in securing new students is characteristic of the small college only. Quite to the contrary the high pressure program set up by many of the larger institutions makes the Juniata plan look insignificant. Large and small colleges alike look for the following kind of service from their grads who are in positions to help in recruiting.

1. Become thoroughly acquainted with the College as it is today. Keep at hand facts which will be of interest to prospective students and their parents, i.e., details regarding admission requirements, curricula, housing, costs, etc.

2. If possible, meet with prospective Bridgewater students in the high school or junior college.

3. Assist representatives of the college in their visits to your community.

4. Ask alumni attending local chapter meetings for names of prospective students and make certain that these names are forwarded to the college.

5. Invite prospective students and their parents to local chapter meetings.

6. Arrange a new student party, such as a tea or reception, during Christmas or Easter vacations for their parents, undergraduates home for vacation and their parents and alumni.

7. Bring or send individuals and groups of students to the campus to see the college in actual operation.

8. Send names and addresses of prospective students to the college, asking that catalogs be sent to the students.

Without being asked to, so many college alumni preform these services just because they take justifiable pride in showing their interest in their college.

For ten years at Juniata we have asked all our entering new students to answer a questionnaire designed to inform us how they learned about Juniata. We listed 6 of the most likely sources and why they selected Juniata. (We listed 12 of the most likely reasons.) You will be interested to know that for several years the highest vote as to source of information went to "an alumnus of the College." In giving their reasons for choosing Juniata the predominant choice is the fact that we are a small college. We were pleased to know that seven out of the eight years the second most popular reason was the "scholastic reputation of the college"—and once this took first place.

My own alumni would wonder how I could get so far into a paper of this sort without more than a casual reference to the Alumni Fund. On the other hand, realizing what is happening to the phenomenal growth of the Bridgewater Alumni Fund the less I say the

better. Let us look at these two children of our respective proud alma maters. Bridgewater Fund only eight years old has grown to \$39,365 with a constituent group of 4700 alumni. At the rate you are going I am scared of being overtaken. We count associates (non alumni givers) and you don't. But you count annuity gifts and estates and we don't. You have 364 sustaining members who give \$50 or more and we have 137 One Hundred Club members who give \$100 or more. And of these there are 19 One Thousand Club members who promise to give \$1000 or more to J. C. as long as they live. Another interesting observation is that your average gift this year was \$57.67 and the Juniata average was \$50.58. Your Alumni Secretary was very careful to put this fact in the *Newsette* because he noticed what happened to Juniata the year before when we broke into the National Honor Roll of College Alumni Funds by ranking seventh in the nation on "average gifts" with a figure of \$56.95.

Our total fund of about \$50,000 per year amounts to the income of \$1,250,000 at 4%. This means that annual giving from the Juniata alumni has now exceeded the income from our endowment. Your fund, figuring the same way, represents income on one million. So that shows how important our alumni are financially.

As the years go swiftly by, I become more and more appreciative of the growing interests of college alumni in their alma maters. That is why I have a growing faith in the future of the private college,—especially Bridgewater and Juniata—and I salute you for doing so ably so many of Rufus King's most difficult tasks.

PROGRAM FOR BRIDGEWATER ALUMNI RETREAT OF
OFFICERS, DIRECTORS, AND LOCAL CHAPTER
REPRESENTATIVES, AUGUST 29, 30,
AT THE CAMPUS

HEADQUARTERS: BLUE RIDGE HALL ALUMNI ROOM

AUGUST, 29

- 4:00 P.M.—Registration and room assignments
5:30 P.M.—Dinner, college dining hall
6:30 P.M.—Opening session
 —Bridgewater Alumni Association and the purpose
 of this conference, Rufus B. King
 —Objectives and needs of Bridgewater, Warren D.
 Bowman
 —Discussion
9:00 P.M.—Social hour with refreshments — View exhibits

AUGUST 30

- 8:00 A.M.—Breakfast
8:45 A.M.—Morning session
 —Recruiting and admissions program at Bridge-
 water, Dean John W. Boitnott
 —Publicity program, Clarence May
 —Athletic Program, Coach Danny Geiser
10:30 A.M.—Recess and cokes
10:45 A.M.—Workshop session (Topics proposed by repre-
 sentatives)
 —Work of local chapters, including projects and
 activities between annual meetings
 —Work of alumni directors
 —Should there be direct alumni representation on
 the college board of trustees?
 —Permanent class officers, value of
 —Reunions, how to increase attendance
 —Annual meeting, method of electing officers
12:30 P.M.—Lunch
1:15 P.M.—Final session
 —Importance of alumni to a college: special reference
 to Juniata and other colleges, Harold B. Brum-
 baugh, Juniata College
 —Discussion and evaluation of conference
3:00 P.M.—Adjournment