A new dorm with common areas for students to study, gather, and hangout. A library with quiet reading areas. A state-of-the-art science and math center. A student union with a coffee shop and snack bar.

These aren’t dreams of what Oxford might one day boast but plans for what it hopes to build—and sooner rather than later.

“The exciting thing is, we’re moving ahead with these projects—which will significantly enhance our ability to recruit faculty and students—more quickly than we ever imagined,” says Myra Frady, dean for resource planning and CFO. “The residence hall will open in the fall of 2008.”

Oxford administrators established priorities and are moving ahead with project plans after a space needs analysis completed by Paulien and Associates planning consultants in December 2005 deemed certain improvements absolutely necessary to bring the college’s facilities up to national standards.

Mel Lockhart, a former administrator at Emory who is now a senior consultant at Paulien, led the analysis.

Lockhart examined Oxford’s current facilities to determine how they are being used and whether they are adequate to support current enrollment and programs; she also estimated the amount and type of space that will be needed to support future growth and development.

“Oxford has significantly less space than other schools of its size,” Lockhart says. “Even at current enrollment levels, there are shortfalls in virtually every category of space, from instructional space and faculty offices to physical education, library, and student union space. Housing, food service and physical plant space also are in deficit relative to normative standards.”

For example, the national norm is 150- to 250-assignable (usable)-square-feet (asf) per student in traditional residence halls; Oxford has less than 100 asf per student. Typically, teaching labs for twenty-four students are sized between 1,100 and 1,500 asf; Oxford’s science labs average only 900 asf each.

“All of these are significant deficiencies,” Lockhart says. “The student comments and feedback on the survey reflect the shortcomings.”

Oxford has already embraced three of the recommendations as priorities—the new residence hall, more library space, and a modern math and science center. Other acute needs identified in the analysis include open computer labs in every major academic building, dedicated space for student and faculty research projects, a fully air conditioned gym, larger faculty offices, more storage and conference rooms.

“While Oxford’s facilities will never be as extensive as those on some of the larger university campuses, they can and should be comparable in quality to space there and on the campuses of the best liberal arts colleges,” says Lockhart. “In surveys, students cite quality and conditions of facilities as a key factor in their decisions about where to apply and what school to attend.”

If Oxford’s student body is gradually increased from under 700 to between 900 and 1,200, as has been proposed, there would be even more challenges placed on already inadequate and outdated facilities.

Specific suggestions from the assessment include three that Oxford has already embraced as priorities—the new residence hall, more library space, and a modern math and science center. Other acute needs identified in the analysis include open computer labs in every major academic building, dedicated space for student and faculty research projects, a fully air conditioned gym, larger faculty offices, more storage and conference rooms.
Sophomore Embodies Spirit of Volunteerism

During a year off between high school and college, Amanda McCullough '06OX found a place where she could make a difference, and since then there has been no turning back.

Even though she’s at Oxford, Amanda McCullough continues to make a difference for La Casa Hogar Los Gorriones.

While volunteering in Peru with an organization called Cross-Cultural Solutions, McCullough heard about a home for abandoned children in Ayacucho, called La Casa Hogar Los Gorriones, which was perpetually short on funds, but long on care and love for thirty abandoned, neglected, or disabled children. When McCullough saw the difference La Casa Hogar was making in its residents’ lives, and she also saw the poor conditions and lack of funding the home struggled with, McCullough knew she had to do something.

“I fell in love with it,” says McCullough. “It’s a special place. The children there were suffering and abandoned, and since coming to the home they were receiving love and were turning into happy kids.” McCullough finished her year helping out with the children there and headed to Oxford in the fall thinking there had to be some way she could continue to help.

Volunteer Oxford provided an outlet. Through the organization, McCullough started the Peruvian Orphanage Project to raise money for La Casa Hogar Los Gorriones. Right away, twenty students signed up to get involved. “People have been wonderful,” says McCullough. “These people—faculty, staff, and students—who have never met the kids are willing to do so much to help.”

Crystal McLaughlin, director of student development, who oversees Volunteer Oxford and works with McCullough in her efforts, is impressed with what McCullough has been able to accomplish. “I think Amanda is incredibly determined,” she says. “When there is an obstacle in her path to raising money for the home, she is not deterred, she just thinks of a way around it, and it’s usually a better way.”

Last year the Peruvian Orphanage Project organized fund-raisers on campus ranging from car washes to a dinner date auction, the group’s most successful event, which raised $720 in one night. This semester there is a faculty basketball game planned, where admission fees will be donated to the home. To date, the Peruvian Orphanage Project has raised more than two thousand dollars for La Casa Hogar.

McCullough keeps in touch with the home since coming to Oxford, through visits and trading emails with the home’s directors. She posts pictures and news of the children on a LearnLink conference so the Oxford community can stay connected.

McCullough’s work for La Casa Hogar Los Gorriones has not gone unnoticed. She was recently honored with Emory’s Humanitarian Award, receiving one of five awards the University gives yearly to graduate and undergraduate students who embody a spirit of volunteerism and sense of community both on campus and off. She is the first current Oxford student to receive this honor in the eighteen-year history of the award.

McCullough plans to make a career of helping internationally. Next year she hopes to continue at Emory at the Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing to earn a nursing degree, and after graduating she aims to work for the Red Cross overseas in developing countries.

“We can all learn from Amanda’s commitment, from her belief that you can be passionate about something, and you can do something about it,” says McLaughlin. “Amanda is a person who gets out there and does something to make a change.”

For more information and to donate to La Casa Hogar Los Gorriones visit www.losgorriones.com or email atmccull@learnlink.emory.edu.

Leinweber to Play at Scottish Bluegrass Festival

Usually known for his command of history, Associate Professor of History David Leinweber will be showcasing another of his talents this summer when he performs at the Scottish Bluegrass Festival in Scotland.

The festival, held August 11–13 in the village Guildtown, is hosted by the Scottish Bluegrass Association, which promotes Scottish and Celtic traditions in music. There, in featured slots in the evening concerts, Leinweber will play his Martin HD-28 guitar and perform a variety of pieces including original work, pieces that highlight the older musical traditions that the festival emphasizes, and selections from his new album, Old World Folk. Leinweber will even bring a little of the American South to the festival, as he plans to play tunes such as “Little Sadie” or “More Pretty Girls than One.”

Back home, Leinweber plays with several groups in the Atlanta area, including a folk trio and a bluegrass ensemble called Dave Ross and the Bluegrass Nightmares, for which he is the lead flats-tickler. He also plays blues piano with an Atlanta band called Bluesheart, which incidentally, he says, has three ordained Methodist preachers in it.

Leinweber credits his lifelong involvement with music to having been “forced,” as he says, to take piano lessons during his childhood. “I’m now glad I was compelled to learn the piano, as it made it easier to understand virtually everything else I did in music,” he says. He learned guitar in high school, and then the tenor saxophone, mandolin, and bass guitar followed. Those at Oxford can thank another interest in Leinweber’s life for keeping him from a career on the stage and instead making him what he is today. “I think I could have been a music major in college,” he says, “but I also loved history, and wanted to be a history teacher.”

In the classroom Leinweber sticks to history, where he teaches courses on ancient, medieval, and modern Western civilization, but his music does make an appearance every now and then. “I certainly can’t turn my classes into sing-alongs,” he says. “I do enjoy using music, however, to augment the main content of my courses when I can. Over the years I’ve created some multimedia PowerPoint presentations highlighting art or other artifacts from various periods. These images are set to appropriate music—anything from medieval plainsong, to Handel, to English folk songs, to operatic depictions of classical or biblical tales. If students can see how a folk song or aria from the nineteenth century might relate to stories or events from much earlier periods, I find it very exciting. Those kind of associations—connections spanning different times, places, and idiomes—are key to a historical perspective in liberal arts education.”

Even with a busy academic schedule, Leinweber manages to fit some practicing in every day. “Being rusty on your instrument can sneak up on you very quickly,” he says. Advising Oxford’s Guitar and Mandolin Society on campus helps keep him active as well.

This semester, Leinweber is on sabbatical to work on research articles, essays, and book reviews, so if you want to hear more about his music and you can’t make it to Scotland this summer, pick up a copy of his new album to hear what he’s been up to.
In Search of the Right Number of Students
A Progress Report

For much of its history, Oxford College has struggled with enrollment. Early in the twentieth century, the migration of Emory College from Oxford to Atlanta left the Oxford campus in search of both a mission and students. Through the decades that followed, Oxford built, promoted, and eventually dismantled one experimental model after another. On occasion it was asked if there were enough students for the College to continue. When our current model of liberal arts intensive education for the first two years of the Emory baccalaureate degree stabilized in the 1950s, there followed a period of relatively rapid growth from 194 students for the 1934–35 academic year to 561 students in 1974–75. Since then, growth has been modest with enrollments averaging 858 from 2000–2001 through 2004–2005. The number of students enrolled in any one year tells only half the story. Year-to-year variation has been another vexation. When enrollments were suddenly up, additional faculty and staff had to be appointed and additional facilities readied. When enrollments were suddenly down, the tuition revenue needed to support the current employees was not there. Fluctuating enrollment has continued to be a problem.

We could have made it easier on ourselves if we had admitted every applicant, but we didn’t. Oxford continued to maintain admissions standards by carefully evaluating the application of each individual to answer the question “Will this student be able to take advantage of Oxford’s educational program and subsequently succeed on the Atlanta campus?” Enrollments may have been problematic, but the quality of the student body remained high. Given this history, it is not surprising that one of the initiatives in our Strategic Plan is to determine the proper balance between growth and stability and pursue optimal size for student body, faculty, staff, and facilities by 2007. We began this work this past fall in discussions with the Board of Counselors, faculty, staff, and students. I summarizes the results of those discussions and added some quantitative analyses in a report titled “The Question of Size: Mission, Vision, and a Recommendation for the Optimal Enrollment at Oxford College” dated January 1, 2006. With input from faculty, staff, students, alumni, and leaders on the Atlanta campus, I produced a second version of the report titled “Mission, Vision, and Scale: A Recommendation for the Optimal Enrollment at Oxford College” dated March 1, 2006. (For the full text of this report, see www.emory.edu/OXFORD/dean/IdealSize/MissionVisionScale.pdf.) This version will be the basis for continuing discussions as we work toward consensus.

In both reports I have recommended a target enrollment of 1,200 students to be achieved over a period of approximately ten years, provided we carefully conserve the Oxford College spirit and culture. An explicit assumption is that the number of students who want to enroll will continue to increase. We were surprised when for the first-year class of 2003–2006 the number of applicants increased and the proportion of students offered admission that actually enrolled also increased. This resulted in an enrollment of 683—the largest on the Oxford campus in 169 years. As of February 28, 2006, applications for next fall are up 10 percent over last year! Although there is no guarantee, it looks likely these trends will continue. Two different perspectives argue that Oxford will better accomplish its mission with a larger enrollment. One is that our current enrollment does not allow the economies of scale that support the diversity of courses and the quality of facilities that Oxford’s students need and deserve. At our current enrollment, we cannot offer some courses available to first-year students and sophomores on other liberal arts campuses. This past fall, we could not support three students who wanted second-year Italian. Had there been six, we would have. A facilities assessment completed by Daniel Paulsen and Associates just four months ago found our facilities seriously deficient in quality and quantity. Oxford’s culture has made a virtue of limitation in the past, but there are limits to this approach. Facilities in some areas are limiting what we can teach. It may seem contradictory to suggest that growth is the answer to overcrowding, but the economy of scale that comes with larger enrollments makes it possible to build new facilities that address both quality and quantity needs at the same time. Thus, we expect increased enrollment to help build a resource base that will help Oxford better achieve its mission.

The second perspective concerns the distinctive contribution of Oxford students to Emory University. Faculty on the Atlanta campus tell me they can pick out the Oxford students. They are the ones in the front row asking the hard questions. If they stay after class to argue, it is more likely to be about your lecture than about their grades. They are curious, collaborative, and personally engaged in the learning process. In 1975 Oxford students made up 15 percent of the Emory undergraduate enrollment. Because Oxford has grown more slowly than other undergraduate divisions, that number is now 8 percent. If all other divisions stopped growing and Oxford increased to 1,200 students, we would be back to the 1975 level. Oxford students leave the Emory community and will do so more significantly if their numbers increase.

When we have reached consensus in the Oxford community, we will not be done. Oxford’s students are Emory’s students, and we must continue to work hand in hand with our Emory colleagues to ensure Oxford continues meld smoothly into the Atlanta campus. Then we will begin the huge but exhilarating tasks of funding and building our capacity to support more students. An increase in students means an increase in faculty, staff, residence halls, athletic facilities, and classrooms. But in the end, this will all be well worth the cost because Oxford will be better, Emory will be better, and more students will have the benefits of an Oxford education.

Stephen H. Bowen
stephen.bowen@emory.edu

Sports
Ali Sullivan
Named All American

In December First Team All Region player Ali Sullivan 06OX was named 2005 NSCAA Second Team All American as an NJCAA Division I soccer player.

The All American Award recognizes the most outstanding student-athletes in their sport, regardless of geographical location. Sullivan was selected by a national committee of coaches that ranked her as one of the top twenty-six players among thousands in NJCAA Division I women’s soccer.

Based in Mission, Kansas, the NSCAA is the largest coaches’ organization in the United States. Since its founding in 1941, it has grown to include more than 17,000 members who coach both women and men at all levels of the sport. In addition to a national rankings program for colleges and high schools, NSCAA offers an extensive recognition program that presents more than 10,000 individual awards every year.

“We are very proud of Ali’s accomplishments. We are happy she has received national recognition for her incredible performance. She is an outstanding soccer player,” said Head Women’s Soccer Coach and Oxford Athletic Director Edgar Flores.

Ali Sullivan served as co-captain of the Oxford Women’s Soccer Team. She helped lead the team to 29 wins in only two seasons and back-to-back regional championship appearances. Sullivan finished the 2005 soccer season as the NJCAA Region XVII runner-up Player of the Year, First Team All Region, and Fourth Ranked Player in the NJCAA Division I rankings in scoring with 29 goals. In all, Sullivan scored 61 goals and 30 assists in 42 games for a total of 150 points for her career as an Oxford Eagle and set new records in every possible area.

Sullivan was honored at the NSCAA All-American luncheon in January as part of the 2006 NSCAA Convention in Philadelphia. There, Jon Stewart, host of The Daily Show with Jon Stewart, was the guest of honor, and he handed Sullivan her award.
‘More than the Money’
Endowed scholarships create link between honorees and recipients

W hen Judy Greer, professor emerita of physical education at Oxford, was honored with a scholarship named after her name just before her retirement in 1996, she considered it a lovely gesture from the Class of 1939, spurred by long-lasting friendships and nostalgic memories.

But Greer, who recently celebrated her seventeenth birthday, has come to realize that the scholarship—granted to rising sophomores who exemplify the spirit and mission at Oxford and carry a GPA of 3.0 and a record of leadership—is more of a link to the future.

“It has grown to the point where they can offer it to two students a year,” says Greer, who still lives less than a mile from Oxford. “She sends me a notice, and I write the scholars a note and usually get to meet them. Often, they are in and out of my house during the whole time they’re at Oxford.”

The very first Greer scholar, Melissa Traver ’97OX 03T, recently visited with Greer and introduced her to her baby son, Xander Griffis. These students have come to mean so much to Greer that she now asks friends and relatives to donate to the fund instead of buying her gifts on holidays and birthdays. “What do I need?” she says. “Nothing. This is much more gratifying to me.”

Judy Greer can see the benefits of the endowed scholarship that bears her name.

Oxford has more than fifty named scholarships and fellowships, totaling $4.6 million. To be endowed, a scholarship must reach $100,000, although many scholarships from the past have been “grandfathered in.”

“In my mind, scholarships always take precedence as the number one giving priority,” says Director of Development Tom Willifong. “This is probably true for all small liberal arts colleges, but especially for Oxford. The lifeblood of any college is to provide financial aid to its students. The beauty of an endowed scholarship is that it exists in perpetuity. It will help students forever.”

New scholarships attain endowment regularly. The Bloodworth scholarship, initiated in 2001 by Gladys Bloodworth of Des Moines, Iowa, in memory of her husband, the Reverend W. Marion Bloodworth 49OX 59T, was given for the first time this year to Theresa Westlake ’07OX of Decatur. “I am honored to be the first Bloodworth scholar, and I appreciate the help that this scholarship has given me to continue my education at Oxford College,” says Westlake. “I hope to be a strong representation of everything that Mrs. Bloodworth stands for and expects.”

Alumna Writes History of Elbert County

A merica is a migratory society, and even for black Americans with roots in the South, it is rare to find a family like that of Aurolyn Melba Hamm ’76OX 78C, which has stayed put for generations. She was able to trace her father’s Elbert County, Georgia, roots prior to the Civil War, when her great grandfather was enslaved.

Her father, Charles Augustus Hamm Sr., was the first African American elected to public office in Elbert County, a locality near the South Carolina border famous for its proximity to lakes Hartwell and Russell and for its world-renowned granite quarries.

Hamm, now a science teacher at Elbert County Middle School and the mother of two grown children, including April Hamm ’93C, grew to adulthood in a vibrant black community populated by farmers, teachers, shopkeepers, dentists, doctors, craftsmen, and other regular working people. Armed with a trove of photographs from residents and a local museum, she set out to document their stories. The resulting book, Elbert County Georgia, is part of Arcadia Publishing’s Black America Series and one of some sixteen books on black communities in Georgia.

“In spite of . . . political and educational obstacles, many of the Americans born in slavery persevered and made real contributions to Elbert County and to the United States,” Hamm said of Elbert County’s noteworthy black citizens. Among these were Bishop Henry Heard, born in 1830 on the Jones plantation, who served in the South Carolina House of Representatives during Reconstruction and as an unofficial ambassador to Liberia from 1898–1899; Bishop William Alfred Fountain Sr., Morris Brown College’s fifth president; Horace Tate, the first black awarded a PhD from the University of Kentucky and later a Georgia legislator; and James Paul Thompson, Elbert County’s first black physician.

Thompson’s story caused a furor in his day. In 1915 he was killed by a local white physician, Alfred S. Oliver. Many blacks believed Oliver killed Thompson for correctly diagnosing a young white woman with scarlet fever rather than the common cold Oliver had surmised. The doctor’s version of the incident had him accidentally shooting Thompson in the chest at “close quarters,” and he was acquitted.

When Hamm searched local newspaper archives, she found little record of this infamous incident. The stories had been expunged, much like those of Elbert County’s black population. The discovery strengthened her resolve to find and tell the stories of the county’s “forgotten” black citizens.

Yet the situation wasn’t always so bleak between the races. Hamm’s mother, originally from New Orleans, was Catholic and committed to raising her children in the faith. In 1931, when she and her family joined the county’s only Catholic church, they did so without incident. “Now that amazes me,” said Hamm. “These people in that particular church just really amazed me.”

Even more so, she said, when she and her siblings celebrated their First Communion and took pictures alongside their white counterparts, the local paper refused to run the picture each time. “The white families of St. Mary’s Catholic Church shrugged their shoulders and did not mention [the slight] to Marie Parker Hamm or her children until many years later,” Hamm wrote in the preface to her book.

About these difficult chapters in the county’s past Hamm said, “I’m maybe a little sad about them, but because of the era I grew up in, I think we were conditioned to expect that. I just took it in stride because of the time. It’s pointless to be upset over things that are in the past and out of your control.”

For Hamm, the good memories of growing up in an idyllic Elbert County outweigh the bad: “It was wonderful. As children we were protected, and the community really watched out for us. We didn’t have to worry about too many things.” She returns the favor by bringing the character of her community and its people to life in the pages of her book.
Costa Rican Students Try a New Community

Due to the generosity of an anonymous donor, David Gomez 07OX and Sylvia Guadamuz 07OX traveled from Guanacaste, Costa Rica, to attend college at Oxford. Faced with colder temperatures, making friends, and learning in a new language, Gomez and Guadamuz have enjoyed many new experiences along the way. Here are some of their impressions of adjusting to life at Oxford.

SG: What has been the nicest surprise about Oxford?

DG: I joined Sabor Latino. Being a student from a Latin country, I wanted to help share others the wonderful aspects of Latin culture. Also I joined ROSA because in Costa Rican Universities there aren’t clubs that support LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) people.

GG: What do you want to do after you graduate from Emory?

SG: When I graduate I think I might stay a few months here in the United States but after that I’m definitely going back to Costa Rica because my purpose was to get a good education to give back everything my country has given me.

DG: I might stay in the United States and work for a brief period of time, and then go back to Costa Rica.

In 1836, a small band of Methodists in Newton County dedicated themselves to founding a new college, named for a bishop who inspired them with his broad vision for an American education that would mold character as well as mind.

One hundred and seventy years later, the 1836 Society honors the legacy of the founders by recognizing those individuals whose planned gifts today will strengthen Oxford and Emory for the next two centuries—and beyond.

Join this distinguished circle of alumni and friends by supporting Oxford and Emory through your will or with another planned gift. For information, contact Chip Wallace in the Office of Gift Planning at 404.727.1637 or chip.wallace@emory.edu.

The Alan Palmer Golf Tournament was held during the fall 2005 convention of the National Association of Independent Life Brokerage Agencies in Phoenix, Arizona. More than $30,000 was raised by the 106 participants, and the total was added to the Alan Palmer Memorial Scholarship endowment at Emory University. The first Alan Palmer scholar, Emily Allen 06OX from Gainesville, Georgia, was named at the beginning of the 2005–2006 academic year.

Oxford Outlook is published twice a year for Oxford College of Emory University by University Publications, a department of Public Affairs, located at 1655 North Decatur Road, Atlanta, Georgia 30322.

Third-class postage paid.

Editor: Jane Howell
Contributing Writers: Stephen Bowen, Stacey Jones, and Mary Loftus
Graphic Designer: Michael Huston
Photographers: Ann Borden, Kay Hinton, Marvlyn Kirk, and Jon Ramey

Marshall Duke: Candler Professor of Psychology at Emory University, will deliver the keynote address at Oxford’s 161st commencement ceremony. Duke, who is known as an inspiring teacher, an innovative researcher, and an involved member of the community, joined the Emory faculty in 1970. Over the years he has directed the University Counseling Center, chaired his department, and spoken to nearly every group within the Emory community at least once. In 1985 he began his talk to freshmen parents, which he continues to deliver annually.

Duke received a BA in general psychology from Rutgers University and a PhD in clinical psychology from Indiana University. Twice he has won the Emory Williams Distinguished Teaching Award for excellence in undergraduate teaching.

Marian Wright Edelman: founder and president of the Children’s Defense Fund (CDF), will be the keynote speaker and honorary degree recipient at Emory’s 161st commencement.

Edelman, a graduate of Spelman College and Yale Law School, has been an advocate for disadvantaged Americans her entire professional life. Under her leadership, the CDF has become the nation’s strongest voice for children and families. Edelman has received more than one hundred honorary degrees and many awards including the Albert Schweitzer Humanitarian Prize, the Heinz Award, and a MacArthur Foundation Prize Fellowship. In 2000 she received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation’s highest civilian award, and the Robert F. Kennedy Lifetime Achievement Award for her writings, which include eight books.
Envisioning the Future—continued from page 1

more common areas to foster student/faculty interaction and peer group study, a proper student union with a books and merchandise store, gathering spaces, and a snack bar/coffee shop.}

In Passing

Ina Jane Wundram

Margaret Budd Stephenson

Likewise, the age of Oxford's historic buildings is not a problem in and of itself, and can even be a plus, Lockhart says, since they bring charm and dignity to a campus. But, she adds, "antiquated space with obsolete building systems or equipment are problems. . . At Oxford, building condition ranges from excellent (Tarbuton Center) to unusable (Phi Gamma)."

In accordance with Oxford's strategic plan, new and improved facilities will enhance the college’s "distinctive and distinguished" status and provide the space and equipment more supportive of the stellar teaching and learning already occurring on campus, says Dean of Academic Affairs Kent Linville.

"There is an optimism and a willingness to jump in and support projects unprecedented in the thirty-three years that I've been here," Linville says. "We’re on a whole new road, consonant with our history, but conceptualizing something new and larger. You have lots of contact with your professors, and everything is close.

Ina Jane Wundram 62C 64G 66C of Conyers, Georgia, professor emerita of anthropology at Oxford College, died January 18, 2006. A native of Atlanta, Wundram earned a BA in anthropology, a MA in anthropology, and a PhD in anatomy from Emory University as well as an MA in anthropology from Portland State University and an MA in liberal arts from St. John's College in Santa, New Mexico.

Margaret Budd Stephenson 290X of Covington, Georgia, died January 19, 2006. Stephenson, who was born in Valdosta, Georgia, in 1912, was the only girl in her class for four years at Emory Academy in Oxford, Georgia. While she was a student at Emory Academy, Stephenson was the first female president of the literary society, Phi Sigma. After graduation, Stephenson attended Wesleyan College. She was married to Ernest Lee Stephenson for sixty years. In Covington, Stephenson taught kindergartens, was active in Covington Community Theater as historian, and was member of and choir director for the Covington Presbyterian Church. In 2000 Stephenson was asked by the Newton County Commissioners to participate in choosing items for the Covington Center for Health, Integrated living and learning.