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THE JUANITA BROOKS LECTURE SERIES

*presents*

The 28th Annual Lecture

A Century of  
Dixie State College

by Douglas D. Alder

*St. George Tabernacle*

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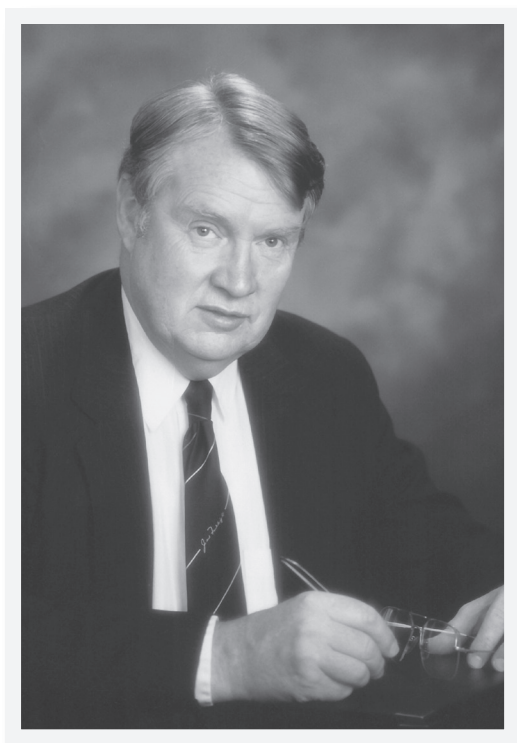


Juanita Brooks was a professor at [then] Dixie College for many years and became a well-known author.

She is recognized, by scholarly consent, to be one of Utah's and Mormondom's most eminent historians. Her total honesty, unwavering courage, and perceptive interpretation of fact set more stringent standards of scholarship for her fellow historians to emulate. Dr. Obert C. and Grace Tanner had been lifelong friends of Mrs. Brooks and it was their wish to perpetuate her name through this lecture series. Dixie State College and the Brooks family express their thanks to the Tanner family.

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The author, Douglas D. Alder, received B.A. and M.A. degrees from the University of Utah in 1957 and 1959. His Ph.D. is from the University of Oregon, 1966. He did his research for his doctoral dissertation on a Fulbright Fellowship in Vienna, Austria. He taught European History at Utah State University from 1963 to 1986. Then he was appointed president of Dixie College, serving until 1993. He remained at Dixie after his presidency, teaching history full-time until 1999. From 2002 to 2009 he was an adjunct professor there. Since then he has been doing historical research and writing. He is married to Elaine Reiser and they have four grown children, twelve grandchildren and two great-granddaughters.

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# A Century of Dixie State College \*

By Douglas D. Alder

It is appropriate that we are gathered this evening in the St. George Tabernacle to celebrate the centennial of Dixie State College. The reason is because this building served as part of the original Dixie campus. It was even the location of the precursor to Dixie College, which was started previous to Utah statehood.

In 1888, LDS Church officials in Salt Lake City invited the stake leaders of the entire Church to found a stake academy in each of their areas. The General Authorities were concerned that the pending admission of Utah to the Union of the United States would prohibit religious instruction in the public schools. The LDS First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles decided to sponsor high schools in the Mormon communities. Their schools were intended to include both secular and religious studies so that their graduates would qualify as much as in non-Mormon schools, but have religious instruction in addition.

The Church depended on these schools to generate religious commitments in their youth. As a result, most of the stakes responded and founded a church academy. It was financially challenging for both the church headquarters and its members at the local level. On both the local and central level, the church had to generate money to meet expenses of these academies and the members had to pay tuition for their offspring to attend these schools. At the same time, they were paying taxes to the state, which were used to fund state schools. Nonetheless, LDS members were anxious to have a local church academy in their areas and donated time and money to bring them about. That was certainly the case in St. George and the surrounding area called Utah's Dixie.

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\* The source materials for this lecture are all in the recently published book, *A Century of Dixie State College*, by Douglas D. Alder (St. George, Utah, Dixie State College, October 2010, ISBN 978-0-615-40669-5).

When did that come about? Most alumni of Dixie College can tell anyone that Dixie College was founded in 1911. That is why this year of 2011 is including many celebratory events such as this one. In actuality, there was a precursor to that Dixie College. It was one of those academies started in 1888. For five years, 1888 to 1893, Nephi Savage taught St. George Stake Academy classes in the basement of this Tabernacle. Initially he had as few as 35 students but that number grew to 135 and beyond. The curriculum was divided into two courses — a preparatory one for grades one to four and a regular offering for grades five to eight. John McAllister served as an assistant to Savage to enable that two-tiered curriculum. Each year was divided into three terms — Fall, Winter, Spring. The latter was often small, as many students left to do farm work.

Despite Nephi Savage's many pleas, the stake board was never able to construct a separate college building. The St. George Tabernacle remained the only location for the instruction. The basement was limiting and was damp. Yet students came, including several adults. The Church Board of Education in Salt Lake City supervised the instruction. Savage attended yearly system-wide conferences and kept daily records of every lesson taught in each course for the board to inspect. Nonetheless, the St. George Stake Academy was closed after five years. Support in the region did not increase; it actually declined. The Board of Education of the St. George Stake decided to defer to state-supported schools, which by then were receiving some tax money to help pay the salaries of teachers in each county.

Another precursor to Dixie College was the Woodward School. In 1901 it was completed, uniting the four, tax-supported city schools into one large, modern facility, located on the town square. Initially it had grades one to eight but nine and ten were soon added and as many as 500 students were enrolled. That led to increased aspiration on the part of some students.

For decades young people had been expected to work full-time after age 16. Woodward changed the educational atmosphere and aspirations were increased. The problem was that no options

for high school graduation existed in Washington County. Some families made the sacrifice to send their offspring to the Branch Agricultural College in Cedar City or the Murdock Stake Academy in Beaver or Brigham Young University in Provo or the University of Utah in Salt Lake City or Utah State Agricultural College in Logan. To do that required considerable expense to provide transportation, tuition, books, food and housing. The majority, however, could not finance such a luxury.

In 1906 Edward H. Snow became the stake president of the St. George Stake that included all wards in Washington County as well as those in southern Nevada. He had been a member of the state legislature when the Branch Agricultural College was founded in Cedar City in 1898. He realized that Washington County was being left behind because it did not have a high school. He told his high council that they should have some secular goals as well as religious ones. He suggested building an ice plant, getting electric lights and a water system and establishing a high school as desirable objectives.

Snow began to build a case. He estimated what kinds of funds had been spent to send as many as 75 students north to high school in the last decade. He prepared a formal proposal for an academy in St. George. When Apostle Francis M. Lyman came to their stake conference in 1907, Snow presented his findings. Lyman was supportive and invited Snow to present his proposition to the First Presidency and Church Board of Education. Snow did that a short time later, when he went to General Conference. A positive decision was reached right then. Snow received a commitment of \$20,000 toward an academy building, if the stake members would provide \$40,000 in labor and cash to complete such a structure. Snow returned and presented the proposal to a stake conference, as instructed, and received a commitment of the members to produce the required amount.

The building was sited on the town square, on the southeast corner of the same block that hosted the St. George Tabernacle and the Woodward School. The community undertook the construction

with the same dedication that had been required of the other two structures and using similar architecture. Thomas Cottam, Snow's counselor in the stake presidency, became the foreman of the project and he enlisted the best craftsmen in the stake.

The story of the construction has become a local legend. It required tremendous sacrifice and continuing effort of the high council members to travel to all of the congregations continually to raise funds, material donations and labor. Those men found that the outlying villages were less enthusiastic about the effort than Santa Clara, St. George and Washington. It was obvious that students from those nearby towns could live at home and attend the academy while those from outlying areas like Hurricane, Toquerville, Harmony, Virgin and Pine Valley, would have to pay for housing and food. The agricultural mindset there was more dominant. The high councilors were also responsible for student recruitment and found it challenging in the small, outlying villages.

As the building neared completion, it became necessary to hire a faculty. The local board depended on advice from the Church Board of Education and particularly Horace Cumming, president of BYU, in hiring a principal. On his recommendation, they chose Hugh Woodward for that position, offering a salary of \$1200 a year. To help him decide in the affirmative, they offered his wife a position as domestic science teacher for \$600. The Woodwards accepted. Additional faculty members included Elmer Miller, Maude Snow, David Gourley, William Staheli, Joseph W. McAllister and Lillian Higbee. Urie Macfarlane was hired as custodian and became a memorable figure.

The curriculum was for high school to the twelfth grade and included Modern History, Plane Geometry, Physiography, Physics, Domestic Art, Domestic Science, Economics, Physiology, Violin, Piano and Vocal Music, and Religion. Faculty members were expected to donate 10% of their salary to the college and to live high moral standards. The church saw the academies as a way to instill religious commitments in the upcoming generation, partly by the faculty being role models.



The most enduring contribution of Hugh Woodward was his philosophy of including the students in the administration of the school. He promoted a system somewhat like that used in the Woodward School, now called student government, in which the students elected a president and vice president and also a judge, policemen, a commissioner of amusement, one for athletics, another for debate, and an editor. Rules were established, prohibiting the use of tobacco and alcohol and foul language. Trials were held by the student officers for those who violated the rules. They could be fined 50 cents. Much of that system continued well beyond Woodward's presidency.

In 1916, came the next step forward. Again it was a central church decision. It was determined to allow some stake academies to offer teacher preparation college classes. St. George was one of the academies where that was undertaken. One year of college courses was added and then the following year a second year of college work was included. The name of the institution was changed to "Dixie Normal College." The result was that Dixie College became a combined high school and college, having the eleventh and twelfth grades of high school and the freshman and sophomore years of college.

This combination had some major local advantages. Mainly it provided a large enough group of students to support a full curriculum and especially a successful social and athletic program. High school students could be in the same orchestra or chorus with college students. They could have separate debate teams but be instructed together. Faculty members could teach both high school and college courses. County funds could be used to support the high school programs, which shared the same facilities and same faculty with the college. The county could postpone building a separate high school and yet have its students receive that education.

In 1919 a national crisis impacted Dixie Normal College. An influenza epidemic in the fall spread throughout the nation. The college had to cancel classes for a month. Tragically, the new president, Erastus Romney, had the flu and died. He was only 35

years old and had been expected to remain in office for at least a decade. He had been there less than two years. His wife, Roxey, remained in St. George and became the librarian at the city's Carnegie Library next to the Tabernacle. That way she continued to serve the Dixie students who used that library as well as the one in the college building.

A byproduct of the decision to add college courses was the expansion of the campus facilities. It was required to have physical education courses so a gymnasium, next door north of the main building, was built in 1915-16. Additionally, a science building was constructed in 1928, across Main Street to the east. It was two stories and included classrooms and laboratories for science and home economics instruction. Later, temporary buildings were placed nearby to house the auto mechanics and woodworking courses and the bookstore.

Juanita Brooks, for whom this series is named, taught English classes in that bookstore building. She was a student at Dixie College in 1922. Then she went back to Bunkerville, Nevada to teach for a year. The next year, as a mother and young widow, she went to BYU and completed a bachelor's degree in 1925. She came back to what, by then, had become Dixie Junior College to teach English and debate. In 1928-9 she went on sabbatical leave to Columbia University to complete a master's degree. Upon returning to Dixie she was appointed Dean of Women. She continued teaching English but had to give up debate. In 1933 she married a 55-year old widower, Will Brooks, and had four children in the next five years. That interrupted her academic profession but not her writing. Will brought four children into the marriage and Juanita brought one. It was quite a family.

After the children grew up, she returned to teaching until 1955, when her writing and lecturing career took up all her time. She kept in close contact with the college, helping to found the archive in the library and donating the carillon bells to the student center.

Other faculty members on the old campus became almost as legendary as Juanita. One of them was Walt Brooks, the high school

athletic coach, who was Will's oldest son. Others include Earl J. Bleak, the band teacher, Arthur Bruhn in Biology and Geology, Wayne McConkie in Woodworking and Geology, D. Eldon Beck (Biology), Vasco Tanner (Science), Andrew Karl Larson (History), M. J. Miles (Chemistry), Ralph Huntsman (Art), and then the youngsters, Marion Bentley (Theater) and Ron Garner (Music).

Students at the time recorded fond memories of their learning and social activities. The major one, recalled by almost everyone, was painting the "D." It was established by 1915 and located on the hill overlooking the campus from the west. It was a result of student and faculty planning to find a way to unite the students instead of extending the rivalry between the two classes. Leo Snow was asked to locate the spot and align it with Tabernacle Street. The students went up there and gathered the black rocks into a "D" formation and painted them white. Then they went back into town and had a celebration and dance. That has been repeated every year since. There is even an annual "D" Queen. Other events were created — Homecoming, Halloween Dance, Christmas Dance, as well as many clubs and dances and musicals and scores of athletic competitions with other schools.

The students told of their field trips to Zion National Park and even to Los Angeles to see the LaBrea Tar Pits and the museums. They remembered the squeaky busses traveling to athletic events and debate trips. They loved to recall the story of the dances and the elaborate decorations.

The LDS Church Board of Education watched the development of the 20 academies and debated their futures. Some leaders were deeply committed to their role but an increasing number wondered if the Church should really be in the parochial education business. Once Utah was granted statehood, they noted that the state-supported high schools did not seem hostile to the Church. Most of the teachers were LDS, as were the school board members. Why should there be parallel systems?

Gradually that view began to prevail. The determining factor was the Church's experiment with high school seminaries. In 1912

the LDS Church opened a seminary next door to Granite High School in Salt Lake City. The school allowed students to leave the campus for an hour a day or every other day to take religious instruction there. It became clear that this would be much less expensive and could be spread wider. In 1926, the Church closed ten academies that were essentially high schools. They were hesitant to close the ones that had teacher education programs but by 1931 the Great Depression pressed in upon them and they decided to close others. In 1932 Dixie College was notified that the Church would withdraw its sponsorship in 1933.

The story of how the local leaders refused to allow the college to die is the high point of the college history. Very astute negotiations were undertaken with the state legislature, resulting in the decision of the state to take on that sponsorship. They had done the same in 1931 for Weber and Snow Colleges. The governor vetoed the first Dixie bill because he had forbidden the legislature to spend any new money. A compromise was reached and the state took over without appropriating any money for two years and the local citizens agreed to fund the college themselves. That was a near death experience for Dixie College.

One byproduct of this tense situation was the creation of the Dixie Education Association. Five men stepped forward and signed their names to a financial guarantee to cover the college's debt. These men were Orval Hafen, Mathew Bentley, W. W. McArthur, B. Glen Smith, and Joseph K. Nicholes. Later some of these and a few others realized that such financial challenges could come again. They agreed to raise enough funds to cover the college's costs for one year to prevent another death threat.

At that point, 1935, the college moved to a new governing system. Their supervision was taken over by the Utah State Board of Education, the agency that directed the public schools. The board quickly appointed B. Glen Smith from the faculty to be the new president because Joseph K. Nicholes had resigned and taken a position at BYU.

That board soon sent an accrediting team to examine Dixie College. It was to instruct the state board about the legitimacy of the

college. They were concerned about the small college enrollment and about the concept of having both high school and college students in the same institution. They were impressed with the faculty and the campus. They sensed the community support and wrote a positive accreditation. They urged improved recruitment to enlarge the college enrollment and set a goal for separating the high school from the college. Those goals would prove hard to reach. It would take thirty years for them to be achieved and the state board patiently supported Dixie College anyway. The college did receive accreditation from the Northwest Association of Secondary and Higher Education.

World War II impacted all colleges in the United States. Young men left to serve in the armed services. One thousand young men from Washington County went into the military. That was from a population of 10,000 people. In contrast, only 100 served in World War I. The result was that the enrollment numbers declined. They did not bounce back until 1946. In 1940-41 there were 276 college students; that dropped to 216 in 1941-42; 138 students in 1945-46, and 357 by 1947-48. Likely many of them were using the GI Bill. The enrollment remained above 300 most years until the move to the new campus, except for 1953-54 during the Korean conflict.

In 1951 an event occurred that seemed minor. In an attempt to distinguish between the high school and the college programs, it was decided to change the mascots. The word “Flyers” had been attributed to the high school basketball team but was used by the college too. The administration decided that the college should have its own mascot. Nominations were accepted, and in December the word “Rebels” was chosen. There was a debate in the student newspaper but the decision was made anyway. Little concern arose. Four decades late the issue would raise a storm (pun intended — “Red Storm”).

In 1954 Dixie College escaped yet another near-death experience. Governor J. Bracken Lee wanted to limit the role of government and felt the way to do that was to reduce taxes substantially. He initiated a piece of legislation that would close four colleges — Dixie, Weber, Snow and Carbon — and the two vocational colleges,

one in Salt Lake City and one in Provo. That was the first year that Orval Hafen was elected to the state senate from southern Utah. He was new on the hill but very savvy. He was hesitant to break with his party leader but also determined to protect Dixie College. He was present when the Church turned the Dixie College campus over to the state in 1935. Being an attorney, he noted that there was a clause that said that if the state ever withdrew from sponsorship of the college, the college would revert to the Church. He and a few others immediately negotiated with the Church to resume the sponsorship of Dixie, Weber and Snow that had previously belonged to them. The other three, Carbon and the two vocational schools, were established later and therefore not included. The governor welcomed such a compromise. The bill passed and the Church prepared to take on the responsibility. Ellvert Himes, Dixie College President, resigned, convinced that the college's continued existence was assured.

Then came a surprise. The people of Weber County rose up in opposition. They did not want to have their college owned by the LDS Church. Ogden had a large non-Mormon population. They joined with the people in Carbon County, who were very angry with their ex-mayor (J. Bracken Lee) who had turned on them. Together these two groups promoted a referendum to reverse Governor Lee's bill that had passed.

This referendum touched off a big debate. Orval Hafen urged its defeat. He argued that the people of Washington County would be well served by the Church sponsorship. Most of the county voters agreed with him. That mattered little because Ogden could easily outvote St. George. The referendum passed and the six institutions remained under state control. In retrospect, we can see today that state sponsorship has continued faithfully. Would Church sponsorship have been that steady? It had been withdrawn once. Those aware of Ernest Wilkinson's attempt to establish a feeder system for the BYU know that the LDS Church rejected that idea.

Another matter that continued through the 1940s and early 1950s regarded dormitories. Initially, students who came to attend

Dixie College from the outlying towns were able to find living accommodations with families in town or in one of two hotels or some rental options. However, their ecclesiastical leaders in their hometowns, and sometimes their parents, were concerned about their safety. Eventually the bishop of Bunkerville-Mesquite became vocal. He demanded that the college provide a dormitory for girls. Presidents during that period tried to get such a project under way. B. Glen Smith enlisted the help of women's clubs and other community groups. After his presidency concluded, Ellvert Himes took over the office and did the same, with good results. Finally Arthur Bruhn saw the project to completion.

The Dixiana Dormitory effort was something less than constructing the original campus building but it had to be done without any state funding. Here was a time for the Dixie Education Association to show its strength. They authorized the use of some of their accumulated funds. The faculty and students were asked to do the actual construction. The Building Trades Department, with Wayne McConkie as chair, took the leadership. Civic clubs were enlisted. Gradually the building took shape. It was built in phases, so it took almost a decade to complete, with space for 72 girls. It still stands, though its use has been modified. It is located at 123 East 100 South and is now named "The College Inn."

A tale is told fondly by old timers that Governor Lee came to the campus after the referendum had defeated his proposal to close the small campuses. The locals showed him the Dixiana Dormitory and pointed out that it had been built entirely from community resources. He is reported to have said, "Well if the people want this campus that bad, they should likely have it."

Once the plan to close the campus had failed, the campus leaders, Arthur Bruhn and the Dixie Education Association officers, decided that they needed to act quickly to prevent another attempt. The legislature had appropriated funds in 1952 for a new gymnasium but there was no space on the old campus for it to be located. The leaders decided to take a cue from Weber College, which was to build a new campus outside of town.

Orval Hafen knew the situation in the state government. He felt that the legislature would not buy real estate for a new campus. He also felt that if the community could present land to the state to be a new campus, the state would respond positively. He convinced the Dixie Education Association leaders to use the funds they had accumulated to do that. They purchased four city blocks located on 700 East between 100 and 300 South. They presented it to the state and obtained permission to locate the new gymnasium there, implying that this would be the site for the new campus.

Once that was under way, President Arthur Bruhn presented requests for four other buildings, a fine arts center, a home economics building, a science building and a heating plant. They then applied for federal monies for a men's dormitory and a cafeteria. The gym was finished in 1957 and put to immediate use. It became a community center as the town came there for many athletic contests. Campus planners traveled to California and inspected several campuses. They returned with strong ideas about desert design. They wanted the buildings to have an outside feeling — open hallways and lots of natural light. Those plans led to the tone for the new campus and the first four buildings.

By the fall of 1963 the college program was moved to the new campus. The high school remained in the downtown buildings. The new campus was exciting but incomplete. There was no landscaping. Dirt was everywhere. It did not dampen spirits. Enthusiasm was rising.

There was one real downer, however. President Arthur Bruhn was sick. Within a few months it was determined that he had cancer, perhaps from the fallout from the Nevada Atomic Test Site. He died in July 1964. Today there is a memorial to him in the President's Grove, east of the library.

Ferron Losee, from Los Angeles City College, was appointed to be the next president. He brought with him the idea that Dixie should be a community college. Vocational education would attract the enrollment the college needed to end the question of its permanence. He changed President Bruhn's idea that the academic



buildings should be on the north two blocks while the lower south two blocks should be devoted to athletics. Instead, Losee obtained funding for a vocational complex on the lower area to house auto mechanics, aero-tech, secretarial science and stewardess training. Then he obtained state funding for a liberal arts building and an administration building. They also obtained funding for a big dormitory complex and a library.

Enrollment tripled during President Losee's fourteen years. They undertook widespread recruitment. Program Bureau, under Roene DiFiore's direction, was created as a public relations tool. It was very effective, utilizing about 100 students who sang Dixie songs in a lively manner. They won over the legislature. Losee felt no need to compete with Southern Utah State College in Cedar City that won state approval to be an independent four-year college. He felt that the vocational role for Dixie would attract so many students that Cedar City would be no threat.

In 1969 another governance change occurred. The state decided to coordinate the higher education institutions more closely. The Coordinating Council for Higher Education had existed for about three years but had little more than consultative authority. The state legislature felt that too much of their time was taken by the lobbying of the individual colleges and universities. They wanted a system where the nine institutions would work together and bring one coordinated budget to the legislature. To achieve that, they created the Utah System of Higher Education with a Board of Regents and a Commissioner of Higher Education. Dr. G. Homer Durham was appointed to be the first commissioner. The system included all of the colleges and universities. Dixie ended its participation with the Utah Board of Education and moved to the Utah Board of Higher Education. The college is still part of that organization.

The Losee years will also be remembered as a time of internal strife. A group of faculty members, particularly in the social sciences, objected to President Losee's administrative style. They felt there should be more consultation and participation in policy development

and administrative decision-making. They objected to the president solely hiring the faculty and other authoritative behavior.

The problem came to a head over the issue of granting tenure to Mel Smith, the head of the Social Science Department. The faculty advisors recommended tenure and the administrators opposed. The president felt Smith was disloyal. Tenure was denied. A storm took over. Underground newspapers were distributed. Newspaper articles were written in Salt Lake City newspapers. Investigations were undertaken by the Utah Education Association and the Utah Board of Education. The latter group was the official governing board then. Two cases arose in Federal District Court. The board's report was both pro and con. Losee retained his presidency but made several attempts to implement the board's recommendations for more consultation. The court cases were anti-climactic. Smith took a position at the Utah State Historical Society. Healing took at least two years for many and longer for some.

In 1976 a new generation took over. Dr. William Rolfe Kerr from Utah State University became the new president. He had worked under Dr. Glen Taggart at USU and brought a new philosophy with him — decentralization. His openness and winning personality won over the staff and faculty.

He examined the college and especially the relationship between St. George and Cedar City. He chose not to challenge the idea that Cedar City was in charge of bachelor's degrees for southern Utah. Instead he decided to challenge the concept that Cedar City should be the convention headquarters of southern Utah.

Kerr made a proposal that St. George build a major convention center. It should be on the Dixie College campus but be owned jointly by Washington County, Dixie College and several cities in the county, especially St. George. It took three years to get the various agencies to buy in on the idea. By that time Kerr had accepted a position as a vice president at BYU under President Jeffrey R. Holland.

During those years when the young president was at Dixie College, the students responded with verve. They enjoyed the fact that he had been a student body president and an athlete. That his

children were very young brought him and his wife, Janiel, close to them. The traditions of Dixie continued to thrive. Looking through the yearbook, the Dixie Sun newspaper and the Dixie Dispatch faculty news, one will see mention of the following: Delta Psi Omega (drama club), Debate Club, Spanish Club, Hi Lites (airline stewardesses), Desert Wings (aero-tech students), Dance Dimension (ballroom dancers), Jazz, Concert and Marching Bands, Madrigals and Concert Choir, Phi Lambda Delta (business students), Rebelettes and Cheerleaders, Phi Theta Kappa (national honorary society), Sigma Iota Chi (national women's society), Shenandoah Club (dorm students), Lambda Delta Sigma, Sigma Gamma Chi, Program Bureau, Rodeo Club, Rappelling Club, Drop Outs (parachuting), Ski Cub, and International Students Club.

The annual calendar included Sand Blast at Snow Canyon, Sadie Hawkins Day, Homecoming, Sweetheart Dance, Christmas Dance, Men's Week, Women's Week, Most Preferred Men's Contest, Most Preferred Women's Contest, "D" Week, plus parades, musicals, etc. Athletics included football (in the Sun Bowl), basketball, and golf, all for men. Women's teams would soon be on the scene.

The fine arts thrived. Theater productions included "Fiddler on the Roof," "Never Too Late," "A Man For All Seasons," "Glass Menagerie," "Carousel." The Southwest Series included fourteen concerts for the public, including the Utah Symphony, Deseret String Band, and Ballet West.

Kerr's successor was Dr. Alton Wade and his wife, Diana. Wade examined the Dixie Center idea and ran with it. He and St. George Mayor Grey Larkin and Washington County Commissioner Jerry Lewis and other leaders lobbied the legislature for one third of the cost. The college was to raise one third in private funds and the county towns were to commit the other third. Though it was controversial, the request was approved. The Dixie Center was built, including the Cox Auditorium (1200 seats), the Burns Arena (5000 seats), the Eccles Fitness Center (including a swimming pool) and the Smith Convention Hall. A community group, "the Spirit of Dixie Committee," organized by Rod Orton, raised the funds and installed

the landscaping, roads and sidewalks to make up for cost overruns. It was another example of community commitment.

A similar project was undertaken with the Hansen Stadium. A generous gift from Mr. and Mrs. George Hansen of Salt Lake City provided 60% of the funding. The athletic department took the lead in seeking the remainder from the fans. The Bell Tennis Courts were also the result of a generous donation. Between them — the tennis courts, the Dixie Center and the Hansen Stadium — Dr. Wade left his mark on what he called the “lower forty,” the part of the campus between 300 and 600 south. He was also in office when Neil Roberts’ basketball team brought home the national NJCAA championship.

In 1963 when the new campus opened there were 380 students in the college. By the time President Losee retired there were about 1200. When President Wade left for his next assignment in 1986, there were over 2200.

One of the things that happened near the end of Dr. Wade’s presidency was the initiation of the Juanita Brooks Lecture Series, sponsored by her friend, Dr. Obert C. Tanner. Two years later the Dixie College Archives were organized, something for which Juanita Brooks and Andrew Karl Larson laid the groundwork. Here we are in 2011, twenty-five years later, still enjoying that endowment and the tradition of her scholarship.

Dr. Wade nipped at the assumption that Washington County residents would have to drive to Cedar City to obtain junior and senior level courses. He invited Utah State University to offer courses on the Dixie campus as it did in many other places in the state. Soon President Gerald Sherratt of SUSC heard about that and he countered with a proposal that the regents divide up the state into instructional areas and assign a college or university to serve that region. They did so and SUSC was assigned to southern Utah. That ended the USU courses at Dixie College. President Wade was deeply upset by that action. It may have led to his agreement to leave Dixie and accept a position as president at the LDS Church College, BYU-Hawaii.

When President Douglas D. Alder (wife, Elaine) was appointed president of Dixie College, the regents asked if he accepted the two-year role for Dixie. He said he did. That reflected his mindset, having served 23 years at Utah State University. It was not long before he discovered that his opinion was not shared by some people in the community. By 1986 there were 40,000 people in the county and the growth rate was 10% per year. When he left office in 1993, there were 60,000. Growth was everywhere and move-ins were becoming the majority. The regents' model of two research universities, two state colleges and five community colleges made financial sense but demography was challenging it. Certainly Utah Valley deserved more than a two-year college. Many people in Washington County no longer perceived of the area as rural and remote. If that kind of growth continued, Utah's Dixie would soon be the fourth or fifth largest region in the state. Dixie had already passed Iron County and might even double it soon. The next big issue was getting ready to burst.

The Alder presidency went ahead on the existing formula. There was no longer a question of whether Dixie would be closed, it seemed, so plans could be made for permanence and especially for expansion. In the first year, the president asked the legislature for funding to build an addition to the Science Building and it was granted. The Val Browning Learning Resources Center was completed with private funds. The next year the president asked for \$2.2 million for a library addition and that was granted. Enrollment increased steadily but not spectacularly.

The Elderhostel program was initiated and located in the remodeled Dixiana Dormitory. It soon attracted over a thousand people a year and later 2000. Robert Sears helped found the Dixie Invitational Art Show that had as one objective to create an art gallery on campus. Then Sears suggested a National Advisory Council to help with college finances. It was organized and soon undertook a capital campaign that eventually raised \$25 million. Over the next few years, that led to funding for a business building and a student center.

A new campus plan was developed with the aid of Neil Stowe, the director of the State Division of Facilities and Construction Management. The new plan utilized the University of Virginia idea of having buildings surround a “U” with the land in the middle reserved as a park. The University of Utah’s original plan used the same idea. The park at Dixie is now surrounded by the Udvar-Hazy Business Building, the Jennings Building, the McDonald Building, the Browning Building, the Gardner Student Center and soon the Holland Centennial Commons.

Campus athletics were thriving. Football coach Greg Croshaw was at the pinnacle of his career. Ken Wagner left as basketball coach and Dave Rose, his assistant, was appointed to succeed him. Was that ever a winner!

The year 1987 brought the Diamond Jubilee for the college. Ed Rogers included a 32 –page photo history in the yearbook, then came 1988. It was election time and a surprise was in the works. Radio talk show host, Mills Crenshaw in Salt Lake City, revived the J. Bracken Lee idea of cutting way back on taxes. He proposed that the California Proposition 13 be on the ballot in Utah. The idea took off with 67% of the population supporting it and the referendum was on the ballot. When the Board of Regents realized the possibilities, they were in near panic. If it passed, the higher education budget would be cut by \$48 million, more than the total budget of three smaller colleges. There was very serious talk of doing exactly that if it passed, closing the small colleges instead of trimming the research universities. Of course those deliberations were confidential. The regents took action. They asked two of the junior members to organize a political effort to resist the change, Michael Leavitt and Dale Zabriskie. Regent Steve Snow organized Washington County and the National Advisory Council supported him. Student body leaders organized the students to vote as never before. There was registration and voting on campus. On election evening, college loyalists stayed up very late until it was clear that the referendum was defeated by 67%. Once more Dixie College escaped closure!

Student body activities were alive and well. The 1990 yearbook included an essay, "Dixie Spirit: What a record! Enrollment at Dixie College is 'More Than You Think.' A record number of over 2,300 students enrolled here Fall Quarter. More students was good news for Dixie College. There is more participation, more variety, more excellence, more awards, more achievements, more friendships, more of that good old Dixie Spirit! ...Four crowd-pleasing theater productions, an action-packed week of welcoming events, four exciting formal dances, the ever-popular Rotary Bowl, thrilling car rallies, stomps and pillow movies, and more activities than I have room to mention... Dixie College activities don't compete with the academics. Instead they complement them. All work together to make the students well rounded, exciting individuals. Activities are that extra little push that keeps students going when things seem just a little too much."

President Huddleston (wife, Linda) was appointed in 1993 after being academic vice-president at Gateway Community College in Phoenix, Arizona. He came to the position with a commitment to the two-year role for Dixie. The regents thought they had their man to maintain the formula. He too, quickly discovered that some key people in the community wanted to expand that role. He approached Regent Steven Snow and suggested that they present a proposal to the regents that their staff conduct a feasibility study about expanding the role of Dixie College, if enrollment reached 6000. Snow agreed to do that but when it did, the regents turned down the idea.

President Huddleston felt that he had his answer. He would go forward with the two-year mission. He discovered that Dixie College was quite different from Gateway. Almost all the students at Dixie were in the 18-22 age range. They attended classes during the day. At Gateway many of the students were older and came at night. At Dixie social activities were important, as were athletics. It was a traditional college campus.

Huddleston initiated an innovation that allowed people to come to campus for one class without having to pay student activity fees. He was thinking of the older, employed, potential clientele. He wanted to increase enrollment substantially.

Another innovation he promoted was the move from the quarter system to the semester system. The presidents of the Utah colleges and universities had been debating it for months. When he arrived, he brought up the issue and, surprisingly it won the day quickly. With extensive recruiting, that goal was achieved. By 1995 the headcount had reached 4,374.

President Huddleston had also been an athlete. He worked closely with the athletic director, Doug Allred, and insisted that the players improve their academic achievements. He also required that the athletic department be more effective in fund raising so that they would not have deficits as in the past.

During his presidency the Udvar-Hazy Business Building and the Gardner Center were completed. That led to a need to implement the campus plan. Richard Whitehead took the lead in installing the Encampment Mall to link the new buildings together. Again the community came forward. This time it was Todd Langton and the Rotary Club that took the lead to provide the landscaping. A fountain and sculpture pieces were placed at the north end surrounding a plaque with the names of the original settlers, many who had camped on that spot in 1861.

Two large pieces of property became part of the campus, both them on 100 South. The old Harmon's grocery store block was purchased and remodeled to house the Art Department and DXACT, the vocational state college. The other one was the LDS Institute of Religion. Through extended negotiations, an agreement was reached to trade a piece of the campus at the southeast corner for the former institute on 100 South. The Mathematics Department was moved into that building. The LDS Church built a new Institute of Religion on the traded lot.

The biggest project was the construction of a new fine arts center. The plan started modestly with the idea of adding an art gallery to the Graff Fine Arts Center. When the state examined the old building, they determined that it was so far out of code that it would be cheaper to tear it down than to remodel it. The Eccles Foundation had committed \$3 million to the art gallery but the new building cost



much more than that. It took several years for the building to finally receive an appropriation but the Eccles family was willing to wait. It was completed near the end of the Huddleston presidency.

The biggest issue for which the Huddleston presidency will be remembered was the change of role for the college. Key members of the community continued to consult about getting approval to offer four-year degrees at Dixie College. Utah Valley Community College had achieved that goal. They had the advantage of a larger enrollment, larger population and especially larger legislature delegation. Nonetheless, the Dixie people could make that same argument that the economic development of the county demanded expanded college offerings. Eventually those key people organized to lobby for the change. They knew that President Huddleston could not do it because the regents wanted him to defend the two-year role. The group included Maureen Booth, who also served as chair of the Dixie College Board of Trustees, Randy Wilkinson from the Dixie College Foundation, Scott Hirschi from the Washington County Economic Council, Tim Anderson, attorney, Dale Larkin, trustee, Randy Lovell, director of the Dixie Center, Ross Hurst, chair of the National Advisory Council, Representative Bill Hickman from the state legislature, Scott Lovell from the Alumni Council, Tad Derrick, Dixie College legislative representative, and Virginia Woodward, staff representative.

This group met regularly. They hired a professional consulting firm, NORED, the same one that helped Utah Valley Community College. President Huddleston had to stay out of the matter, but then a surprise happened. It was discovered that Southern Utah University had been accumulating the state funds sent to them to be spent on the Dixie campus to deliver courses through the University Center. They had not diverted the funds to their own use, but they had not allowed them to be spent at Dixie. When that was accidentally uncovered, President Huddleston exploded. He sent a critical letter to Charles Johnson, the regents' chair, demanding an investigation. He also abandoned his non-participation in the four-year committee.

Representative Hickman felt that the time had come to initiate legislation for a role change for Dixie College. He knew that the regents would demand that they, not the legislature, make the decision. He also knew that all previous role changes had been done by the legislature. The statewide press became involved, mostly opposing the change because they were supporters of the University of Utah. Hickman's bill called for adding six new bachelor's degrees and changing the name and role of the college. The bill passed the House of Representatives but was held up in the Senate. Hickman had little influence there. Nonetheless, delicate negotiations ensued and a modified bill did pass. In the negotiations, Governor Michael O. Leavitt was consulted and he finally agreed, despite his deep links to SUU. Dixie became a four-year institution that could initially offer two bachelor's degrees. The Board of Regents was given the opportunity to review the whole matter. They did and they changed the name to Dixie State College of Utah to reflect the four-year status. Since that time, 21 more four-year degrees have been added.

During the term of President Huddleston, major changes were implemented to improve high technology on campus. Stan Plewe, Administrative Vice President, took the lead. Gary Koeven was appointed Dean of Information Services, which included the library and computer services. Many new computer programs were implanted. This was a result of efforts that had been under way for three decades. Stan was involved in many of them. He and others visited several campuses to inspect developments in both libraries and computer facilities. The result is that Dixie State College is modernized and current. Bachelor's degrees are offered in Computer Information Technology (with three emphases — Computer Science, Information Technology, and Visual Technologies) and computer labs are located throughout the campus. The biggest one is in the Smith's Building at the Avenna Center (new name for the former Dixie Center). There the original convention hall was converted into a modern computer laboratory where students can take courses individually and be involved in many information services as well as classes.

In 2004 President Huddleston completed his term. Faculty members and local leaders felt strongly that Lee Caldwell should succeed him. Lee had been Academic Vice President for only six months and had no intention of becoming president. The regents hoped to appoint someone who was close to their views. Nonetheless, they appointed Caldwell, partly because the local Board of Trustees lobbied for that decision.

Lee was assertive. He immediately built a case for a major expansion of the role of Dixie State College. He had worked in industry and consulted with the economic leaders in the county. He frankly wanted Dixie State College to follow Utah Valley University that had recently become a state university. He saw such colleges as an economic engine for their areas. He was a computer expert and believed that industries would locate in the local industrial parks if they could hire qualified employees.

Caldwell built a case to show that the state had slipped in its educational attainment in the recent decade. High school graduation had stagnated and the registration of high school graduates at college had dipped. The state's educational role with Spanish-speaking people was dismal. The state that 20 years earlier had ranked sixth in the nation, had slipped to twenty-sixth.

This was news that frustrated the regents. They wanted the presidents of each institution to realize that each could build a case to benefit their college, but they needed to think of the whole system, not just their own. Caldwell seemed to them confrontational rather than being a team player. The regents lectured him, stating that the legislature created the System of Higher Education to work together.

As the months went by, Caldwell had many successes on campus. He and his wife, Bonnie, were involved in college activities, especially the fine arts. He won major funding from the legislature, which allowed the college to hire thirty new faculty members. Several additional two-year degree programs were authorized. Nonetheless the relationship with the regents was tense.

Randy Wilkinson and Shandon Gubler, the chair of the Dixie College Board of Trustees, became advocates of having Dixie State

College become part of the University of Utah. There were several attractive elements to the idea. It would allow many degrees from the University of Utah to be offered on the Dixie campus. There was particularly a need for more degrees in health sciences that the “U” could provide. Other degrees could also be made available and Dixie would not have to wait for accreditation for each degree because they would be University of Utah degrees. A close relationship could be developed with the engineering faculty at the “U” as well as with the library there.

The problem with the idea was that Dixie State would cease being an independent college. It would become part of the “U” and would not have its own links to the legislature or with the regents. The Board of Trustees and the president at the University of Utah would control all of Dixie’s administration and policy. Even the name “Dixie State College” would disappear and become instead something like, “University of Utah at St. George.” Should a major economic crisis occur in the state, the University administration could choose to close the St George campus instead of one of the colleges on the main campus. Senator Bill Hickman pointed that out and made clear his opposition.

In general, the faculty was rather partial to the U. of U. idea but some of the community was quite distrustful. Considerable discussion ensued. It became clear that President Caldwell favored the alliance with the “U.” The Board of Regents did not make a clear response, but they did not oppose the idea. Finally the University of Utah administration stated that implementing the concept would take a major legislative appropriation, between \$10 and \$20 million increase in the annual budget, on-going. It put the project on hold because the national economic downturn eliminated that possibility.

One of the Caldwell administration achievements was a new master plan, envisioning a campus of 15,000 students. National consultants were involved. Plans were undertaken to construct the first building from that plan — A Centennial Commons.

A building to house the Health Sciences Department was planned during the previous administration and completed under Caldwell. It

was located on the campus of the Intermountain Health Care (IHC) Hospital in St. George. This enabled the students in the health programs to have easy access to the hospital and its staff. Named for Russell Taylor, the major donor, it houses the nursing, dental assistant and other medical programs.

Another matter for President Caldwell was athletics. The new four-year status of the college meant that it would have to terminate its relationship with the NJCAA and join Division II of the NCAA. By doing so, the team members would have to achieve a higher academic standard. President Caldwell came to the decision that Coach Greg Croshaw would have to be released, and he so informed him. The decision was not a big surprise but it did upset many of Croshaw's admirers. After a wide search, Ron Haun was appointed. He had been the football coach at Ricks College until it became BYU-Idaho and gave up its programs in competitive athletics.

The Board of Regents notified President Caldwell that they wanted his resignation and he submitted it on March 27, 2008. The community and campus were stunned. At the same time that they announced his resignation, the regents appointed Stephen D. Nadauld as acting president. Nadauld had been president of Weber State when it obtained university status in the 1980s. His wife, Margaret, was a well-known public figure, having served as the president of the LDS Young Women's Association.

The Nadaulds arrived at a very tense time. He immediately set about to greatly increase enrollment. He established an enlarged recruiting committee and set a goal for 400 new recruits by fall. They passed that mark and continued to promote such enrollment. The president then set about to make campus life more appealing for those who came to Dixie. He set up an expanded program for intramural sports. The old gym became a student activities center. A new Dean of Students, Del Beatty, was appointed. Del had been active in student affairs as a student at Dixie in the '80s. Student enrollment for summer quarter was up 67%. By fall 2009 Dixie achieved the largest increased enrollment in the state, many of them in the four-year programs. The headcount was 7,911. The increased

enrollment resulted in increased tuition collections and helped the budget so that Dixie did not have to release faculty members in the economic downturn, as other institutions in the state did.

The president's other innovation was a quiet one. He worked to develop a personal relationship with every regent. He tried to spend three hours with each one. Where possible, he drove them around the campus in a golf cart. He tried to neutralize the opposition of the University of Utah and of Utah State University to having Dixie State become a state university as Utah Valley University had recently done.

By the fall of 2009 Dixie State was offering 13 bachelor's degrees — Accounting, Biology, Business Administration, Communications, Computer Information Technology, Criminal Justice (with SUU), Dental Hygiene, Elementary Education, English, Integrated Studies, Music, Nursing and Secondary Licensure (Education).

During the Nadauld years, even despite the economic limitations, some physical improvements were made to the campus. The O. C. Tanner Amphitheater in Springdale saw a major upgrade. The Jennings Building underwent a complete remodel to house the television and radio stations and the Communications Department. A mobile TV production facility was purchased. The biggest effort was to obtain funding for the Jeffrey R. Holland Centennial Commons, which had been designed during the Caldwell years. Deft lobbying and the help of Representative David Clark from Santa Clara, who was the Speaker of the House, led to approval of the building committee and legislature for that five-story building. It will house student services, the Val Browning Library, the English Department and Administrative Computing Services. A sizable private donation was received to supplement the state funds. The commons is to be located just south of the Gardner Student Center, facing the Encampment Mall. A groundbreaking was held in February 2011.

On Friday, March 19, 2010 Stephen Nadauld was inaugurated as the 17th president of Dixie State College of Utah. The Board of Regents had done an evaluation in the community and on campus

and determined to change his status from interim to president. With the increased enrollment, the approval of the Centennial Commons, the confidence he had about Dixie becoming a university on its own and the cordial relations with the regents, Nadauld had changed most everyone's hesitation about his appointment. Most hoped he would stay until university status was achieved. They knew that he was 67 years old and had not sought the job, but they felt he was the leader Dixie urgently needed and that he and Margaret were a very effective couple.

What can be learned from these one hundred years plus of Dixie College history?

Clearly one message is that the college exists because of the deep commitments of many local people during the whole period. They sacrificed to build the original buildings and many others. They hosted students in their homes. They served and served and continue to do so today. At key moments they came forward to save the college.

Another clear factor is that Dixie College was directed by three different agencies, first the LDS Church, second, the State Board of Education, and third, the Utah State System of Higher Education. All three directed continuing funding to support the college. Without those funds, the college could not have survived. Yes, it did make it through a two-year period without an appropriation, but even then, the LDS Church helped.

The faculty and staff of Dixie State College have always served with modest compensation. The dedication of their lives to the students and to the learning process has been the very lifeblood of the institution.

The students have brought their vitality and devotion to the campus. They energize the faculty and staff and each other. They go forth and contribute to society and bring luster to the college.

The fact that the college actually died once and nearly did three other times makes it clear that devotion to its survival is always necessary. It cannot be assumed that the institution's existence is guaranteed.

