

The Legendary Class of 1964

Each Juniata College Class has many things to look back on that make them a “Legendary Class.” The Class of 1964 is no exception.

A few of the significant events recalled in Dr. Earl Kaylor’s Book “Juniata College – Uncommon Vision, Uncommon Loyalty” include:

Judy Carlton and Judy Fairweather started a kind of journalistic fad on College Hill – when they became the first of three successive duos to co-edit the *Juniatian*.

Rich Morgan played a role in bringing “big name” entertainment to our campus when “The Lettermen,” popular recording artists, performed a concert for the students.

Ron Smelser, was elected in absentia as the Senate President after a long-distance call was placed to him in Germany to confirm his willingness to serve. Ron was part of the study abroad program when elected.

Rich O’Connell led a Juniata contingency in a 98-mile bike marathon from Huntingdon to Harrisburg, completing the trip in six hours and twenty-five minutes.



**AND, OF COURSE
THERE WAS THE
NIGHT OF THE
STEAMROLLER**

With a legend of this nature, and the passage of time, it is natural for there to be several versions of this event.

The following are recollections of the event from faculty and classmates.

How do you remember the events of that evening? Which version is closest to the “real” story? Or do we need to patch these versions together to get the “facts?”

Professor Earl Kaylor’s version in his book “Juniata College – Uncommon Vision, Uncommon Loyalty:”

One member of the Class of 1964 caused amused excitement when he drove off in a steamroller being used to pave College Avenue, which bounds the east campus. The Cloisterite learned how to control the machine by watching the operator through binoculars’. One night he took his place at the levers and rumbled in toward town, thirty or more fellows draped all over the behemoth, which turned left on 18th Street, and with borough police in pursuit, came to rest against a tree beside Leshner Hall. A state trooper, not a local gendarme, made the arrest.

Tom Mull’s Version:

I was there... As I recall it was a Spring evening and Huntington was doing some road work in the area just north of the old Library/Student Hall. About 9 PM the guys from Cloister Hall and North Hall were "restless.". Someone spotted the steamroller and decided to take a ride, most of the guys decided to “party” around the moving steamroller as it traveled over and around the landscape and the road towards the Library. The fun stopped when the police arrived and, as I recall an officer jumped on it and stopped it. At that time the large group of students involved took off running in all directions. This event gave a good break in the study routine!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Dan O'Sullivan's Version:

I was studying in my room in the North Dorm (so it had to be our freshman, or more likely our sophomore year) when I noticed guys out back in the area across the street where the new dorm is now located. They were around a steamroller. As I recall it was Marvin McKown and John Veals who had started it. By the time I joined in there was large number of male students (it was after the 10 PM curfew for female students) railing along with the steamroller, it was on the upper end of Moore Street. At that time there were houses used as dorms along the street. The campus security guy was around trying to get them to stop with no luck. Then the Huntingdon police came driving up Moore Street but the steamroller kept rolling and the cop quickly pulled into one of the spaces beside one of the houses before getting rolled over. The next challenge was to navigate the intersection of Moore Street and 18th Street (now the walkway in the center of campus). Several movements were required resulting in chipping away some curbing. Once around the corner the steamroller and even more male students proceed toward Lesher Women's Dorm. I think the crazy thought was the biggest panty raid ever, by crashing through the front door. As the steamroller began rolling down the hill by Women's Gym/Totem Inn the state police arrived – siren blaring. Now that was enough to get the attention of those involved and everyone scattered – mostly to the walkway to Cloister because of the fenced in tennis court on the other side of the road. Thank goodness one person who knew what he was doing stayed on to stop the steamroller – as I recall Camron Mauger. As he jumped off, the state trooper jumped out of his car and crossed over to the side where Cam jumped off. He grabbed him, slammed him against the steamroller and cuffed him. In the meantime all the other male students – must have been in the 100s – stopped running and were lined up on the walkway to Cloister yelling – “Let him go! – BOO! - Let him go!” The state trooper handed Cam over to the local cop and began running toward the guys on the walkway. Of course we all turned and began to run through the Arch

until after four or five steps we all seemed to realize in unison “What can he do to all of us?” We stopped running and as we turned to look back we saw the state trooper standing in the middle of the yard, hands on his hips, laughing his head off at how he had single-handedly brought fear into this large group of College “men” – or maybe more appropriately “boys” considering the prank that had just occurred.

Gary Leathers’ Version:

Here is my best recollection of the infamous steamroller incident. I believe John Veals started, and was the main operator of, the steamroller. As he turned left and started down the main drag the local Huntingdon policeman (Skunky) pulled in front of him. John didn’t stop. As he approached Totem Inn and headed toward the girls’ South Dorm a State Policeman came in from behind him with lights and siren on. John and a couple others jumped off and ran but the steamroller continued slowly on. At that moment Cam Mauger jumped on and stopped it. Cam was immediately handcuffed to the roller by the State Policeman. Cam was eventually released by the trooper. I heard John Veals was found in the North Dorm in the shower while still fully dressed. I think he (John) was fined two hundred dollars for damage done to the curbs. We chipped in to help him pay the fine. P.S. I know there were five or six guys riding with John when it turned the corner.

Marvin McKown’s version – as relayed by phone call to Dan O’Sullivan in January 2013

Marv indicated he was directly involved in the incident. He said that when he got to the steamroller others had “hotwired” it to get it started. But they did not know how to drive it. It did not have a steering wheel, but used levers to direct its motion. He took control of the steamroller and proceeded from behind North Dorm on to Moore Street. Somewhere along Moore Street the steamroller went onto the lawn of one of the private homes and back onto the street.

Then the local police came driving up Moore Street. Marvin said there were so many fellow Juniata men all over the steamroller that he could not get to the peddles to stop the steamroller. The police pulled off to the side as the steamroller went by. Marvin recalls having some problems turning the corner onto 18th Street and chipping the curbing in that area. He said that when the State Trooper arrived, he (Marv) jumped off the steamroller, but this very strong trooper grabbed him and handcuffed him to the steamroller. He does recall the trooper running toward the group of students on the walkway and thinking this guy is something else. He said that Dean Heberling was very understanding and helpful throughout the time that followed. In the end there were no charges filed against him or anyone else, but they had to pay restitutions for the damage to the private yard and the curb. Years later, when pursuing his teaching career, a student show up one day with the front page of the Huntingdon Daily News that reported the events of that evening – tough position for a person of authority to be in!!! Marv indicated that when Dr. Kaylor was writing his book his sources indicated Marv’s involvement and Dr. Kaylor added the incident to his “History of Juniata” book after interviewing Marv.

John Veal’s version – here are a few added comments received from John Veals during a phone call in late 2012 (John passed away in December 2012.)

John indicated that for years, a fellow perpetrator – Fred Karsch – hoped the story would not get recalled because of his position as a professor at the University of Michigan. John recalled that while being counseled by Dean Yohe and Dean Heberling, Dean Yohe said “Do you realize how many College rules you have broken?” To which Dean Heberling added, “And State Laws too!” John also indicated that they actually made a little money from the collection for the fine.

What is YOUR version of this memorable incident?