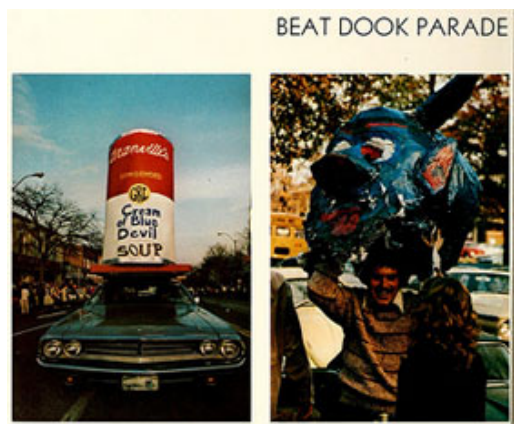


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Carolina's Yackety Yack yearbook features some photos of the annual Beat Dook Parade.

1890 to present: UNC system yearbooks online

History buffs and alumni can go online to glimpse famous grads as young adults and college culture through the years in archived yearbooks from most UNC system universities, thanks to a project based at UNC-Chapel Hill.

The North Carolina Digital Heritage Center has scanned and posted **the yearbooks**. They are part of the center's efforts to digitize and preserve college and university yearbooks from across the state.

Among the famous alumni shown are Andy Griffith at Chapel Hill in 1947, Jesse Jackson at North Carolina A&T University in 1964, ESI reporter Stephen A. Smith at Winston-Salem State University in 1991, Emmylou Harris at UNC Greensboro in 1966 and David Sedaris at Western Carolina University in 1976.

The project has scanned more than 800,000 pages from 51 schools, including 14 of the 15 UNC universities, said Nick Graham, program coordinator for the center. The earliest is the 1890 "Hellenian" from Chapel Hill; three UNC campuses have already contributed their 201 yearbooks. North Carolina State University previously digitized its yearbooks independently.

Celebrity-spotting isn't all that the yearbooks offer, said Graham.

"Yearbooks highlight what is important to each generation, and how student culture and life change," he said.

Graham contrasted yearbooks of the 1920s that showed students posing in formal attire and participating in activities such as glee clubs and debating societies, with volumes from the 1970s and 1980s. By then, said Graham, students were more casual in their appearance and highlights of the college years included political rallies, rock concerts and beer-drinking contests.

"The one constant across the years has been sports," said Graham.

The yearbooks also preserve important traditions, such as the selection at many historically black colleges and universities of kings and queens not only for homecoming, but also for classes and majors.

Graham said genealogists have used the yearbooks to identify and learn about ancestors.

The North Carolina Collection at UNC's Wilson Special Collections Library manages the North Carolina Digital Heritage Center. The center works with libraries, museums, historical societies and cultural institutions across the state to publish historical materials online.

The center is expanding the North Carolina Yearbooks collection by contacting community colleges, said Graham.

Another major program is the effort to digitize old runs of campus and community newspapers from across the state.

The State Library of North Carolina supports the center with funds from the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provision of the Library and Services and Technology Act. UNC contributes the technical and administrative infrastructure and the expertise of staff consultants.

Learn more about the North Carolina Digital Heritage Center.

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