

Tennessee Tech photo-history published

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Almost a century of rare photos covering the history of Tennessee Tech will be presented in a new book by TTU archivist Mancil Johnson and TTU history professor Calvin Dickinson.

The book, "Tennessee Technological University," begins in 1909 and comes up to 2002 and includes former head basketball coach Jeff Lebo leading TTU's team to the OVC championship in 2002.

It follows a chronological history from the school's beginning and is separated into chapters as the names have changed from Dixie College to Tennessee Polytechnic Institute to its present Tennessee Technological University. The book also includes a chapter devoted to former president Everett Derryberry who led the university for 34 years from 1940 until 1974.

"Former president Everett Derryberry is sort of the focal point of the book because he was here so long and because he was here at the right time," Dickinson said.

Another interesting feature of the book is the way it follows the change of the school through photos of Derryberry Hall, a campus landmark, at the beginning of each chapter.

"A symbol of the school changing was the way Derryberry Hall changed," Dickinson said.

For Johnson and Dickinson, the most difficult thing about putting the book together was also the impetus behind the book. According to Johnson, a large number of photos have been accumulating over the years as collections are donated to the archives.

"I had been wanting to do something with all of these old pictures," Johnson said. And with so many photos to choose from, one of the toughest things was deciding which ones to use.

"For every picture we used, there were five we could have used," Johnson said.

All of the pictures come from the TTU Archives, including several from the Harding Studio collection, donated by Mary Linda Johns, Cookeville dentist and granddaughter of Richard Henry Harding.

"We tried to put our emphasis more on faculty and students," Dickinson said. "We included athletics too, but we didn't want it to dominate the book."

"It would have been easy to do a fluff piece but we wanted to do a photographic history of the school," Johnson said.

Another interesting thing about the book is that in addition to people finding themselves in it, some are actually finding their relatives in the book, Dickinson said.

To identify the photos, Dickinson called upon his knowledge as longtime history professor at TTU as well as old yearbooks, archive records and, of course, librarian Christine Jones, who works just next door in special collections.

"A lot of times we could date the picture by the other things in it," Dickinson said. "We could also date them by the way the people dressed."

"Another time consuming task was getting the correct captions, especially for athletic teams," Dickinson said.

"A lot of the information on the sports pictures came from TTU Sports Information," he said.

Dickinson said one of the most interesting things about publishing this book was that the company, Arcadia, sent them a format for photo placement so the two didn't have to spend any time actually designing the layout.

"They told us how many words we could put in the captions as well as the number of words in the introduction," he said. "It made the whole process a lot faster."

And Dickinson said that the printing process was also a lot faster. The book was printed 12 weeks after Dickinson and Johnson sent it in.

"Normally it's six to eight months," said Dickinson, referring to other books he's written.

As Johnson's first book, he said the whole process has been exciting in that he gets to share what he does with the public. "There are pictures in here that have never been seen outside the archives," Johnson said. "For me, it's fun to share what you know about them."

* Dickinson and Johnson's book is available for \$19.99 at many Cookeville-area bookstores including the TTU Bookstore, BookWorks, New Century Books and the Hallmark store in the Cookeville Mall. It contains 128 pages with 200 photos and is in paperback.

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