

Ritual and ceremony still were a big part of Commencement '72, but there were changes. More and more,

# Pomp Gets Personal

By Anne Skelton

Janus is a Roman god with two heads. One looks forward and the other backward. He is an apt symbol for graduation/commencement.

Graduation is an ending and commencement a beginning, or so Webster says. Students, parents, faculty, administrators and speakers looked both into the past with nostalgia and into the future with hope as they took part in the activities on May 14-16 on the Columbia Campus.

One student described graduation as "The period at the end of a sentence of my life's story." Another student, throwing his arms wide open said, "It's big doors opening. Things really starting to happen. A career, marriage, life."

Both of these students attended graduation/commencement activities. Many students did not. For some happiness was "Columbia in a rear view mirror." They had their cars packed and waiting, and, after they had finished their last final exam, they drove away.

Officials estimated that fewer than half of the eligible seniors attended the main commencement at Memorial Stadium. The percentage of master's degree recipients attending was even less. "They've

been through it before," Chancellor Herbert Schooling says.

Administrators agree that interest in graduation/commencement activities is fading. Schooling gives some reasons.

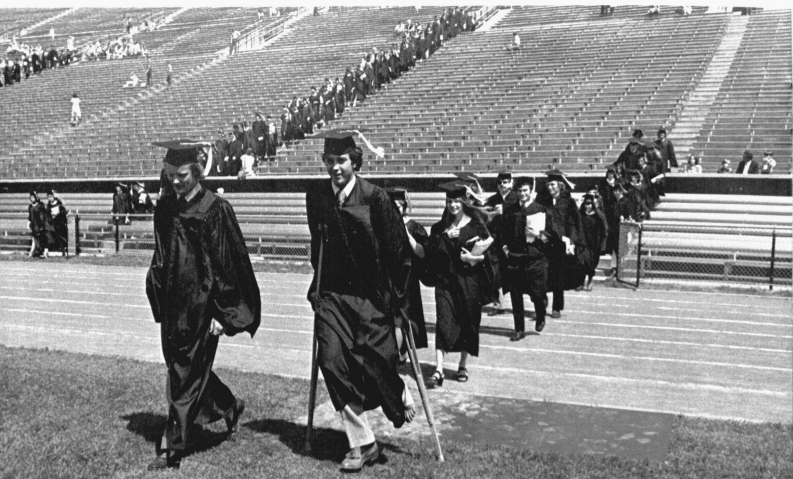
"As more students have parents who are college graduates, neither the students nor the parents attach the same significance to the ceremony. Also, many students are not in school a straight four years. They are in and out of school in the service or working. They don't associate with a particular class that they want to graduate with. You'd have to say, too, that there just isn't the same interest in anything formal and traditional.

"The doctoral graduates attend pretty well," Schooling says. "Perhaps they come because their wives have sacrificed a good deal trying to get to that point. They themselves have spent many years and much effort. And a PhD or EdD means quite a bit still."

"I think we've done everything to make commencement difficult and unattractive," Acting Dean of Faculties Clifton Cornwell says. Cornwell was in charge of the commencement arrangements.



**Mommy and Daddy are new MDs,  
but Jennifer, at age three months, is unimpressed.  
Drs. Jay and Sue Marshall**



Ritual often means a walk — to the grave, down an aisle, into a future.



Originally set for B&PA auditorium, B&PA awards ceremony moved outside at students' request.

"There is over-all a great interest in doing something about commencement to make it a more meaningful academic festival. The parents, and sometimes husbands and wives, have invested their treasure and their care in the students. They need to be rewarded. It needs to be direct, personal and informal. Now it is masses, rigamarole and ceremony. Commencement a year from now is going to be different."

A four-campus committee met this spring to discuss University commencements. They agreed that formal ceremony is often viewed by students as "establishment" and ritualistic. Second, they agreed that college commencement (particularly at the baccalaureate level) has ceased to be the culmination of family dreams and hopes as it was in an earlier day when fewer members of a family and community attained the goal. They said that attainment of the BA degree apparently is about equivalent to

getting a high school diploma 50 years ago. Third, they agreed that many students reject the diploma as having only sentimental value. The document they use when they are seeking jobs is the transcript. Also as the degree decreases in value, the diploma which indicates the degree also has less value. Fourth, personal feelings of pride and accomplishment, the committee said, have been lost in the effort to cope with the large number of graduates.

The committee's most urgent requests are for student involvement in future planning and for a humanizing procedure for the actual commencement exercises in order to establish a more meaningful and personalized ceremony. They recommended decentralization, particularly on the Columbia Campus.

In fact, decentralization already has begun. Many schools and colleges had pre-commencement or commencement activities.

Nurses held a pinning ceremony May 14 in the Medical Center Auditorium. Dr. Ingeborg Mauksch, associate professor of physical medicine and rehabilitation, spoke. Students were involved in planning the ceremony which included a slide show with contemporary music as background.

"There is more emphasis on the pin than there is on the degree," Miss Muriel Leach, administrative assistant says. Out of 40 June graduates, only 10 attended the main ceremony at the stadium.

One who did was Mrs. Frances Wright, a 46-year old grandmother, who enrolled in Moberly Junior College seven years ago. During her three years there, her husband became ill. She transferred to the School of Nursing, commuting daily.

Both her legs were broken in a head-on collision. Doctors said she might never walk again. But walk she did, and she resumed her studies.

"Good nursing care is something people have a right to. I am thankful for the times I've been helped by good nursing and I'd like to help other people," she said.

A senior convocation was held by the College of Engineering May 15 in Jesse Auditorium. Earl K. Dille, a native Missourian and 1950 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, told graduates that saving the environment must be implemented through technology, not in spite of it. Dille is executive vice president of Union Electric Company, St. Louis. A reception for graduates and parents was held in the Memorial Union following the speech.

The College of Education held a reception at 10 a.m. the morning of commencement at the Memorial Union for graduates. Faculty, parents and students



The Columns were a favorite spot for picture taking and hijinks.

chatted, sipped punch and munched cookies.

The School of Veterinary Medicine had a pre-commencement ceremony also at 10 a.m. at the Livestock Center Arena. Dr. William Carlson, president of the University of Wyoming, told graduates "The winds of change keep blowing across this land at ever increasing speeds. It remains for us to tell the difference between the good and the bad, the healthy and the unhealthy."

At Gwynn Hall Lounge at the same time, graduates and their parents met with faculty of the School of Home Economics. A tea table was set with a silver coffee service, a punch bowl and platters of bite-sized rolls and fresh strawberries in pineapple boats.

"It may seem silly to worry about feeding people, but in America food is one way we show hospitality and warmth. It is a good idea, for practical reasons of parking and crowding, to feed people on Campus on the day of commencement, if we can," one administrator says.

"I'm in favor of divisional graduations on Campus while the other students are still here," Dr. Margaret Mangel, director of the School of Home Economics, said as she greeted parents and congratulated graduates on marriage and career plans.

The School of Medicine held a 10:30 a.m. pre-commencement ceremony at Jesse Hall. A luncheon followed at Mid-Missouri Mental Health Center Gymnasium. A dinner had been held at the Ramada Inn on Sunday, May 14 honoring the graduating MDs.

On Francis Quadrangle, B&PA held its awards ceremony. A couple of grandmothers shared an umbrella against the noon sun. Bursts of applause for the honored graduates drifted across the quadrangle.

And for the first time in its 64-year history, the School of Journalism held a separate commencement. Greg Worden, Journalism Students Association president, and a graduation committee planned the event. A majority of journalism students voted to have the ceremony and to wear caps and gowns. The ceremony was held at noon at the Missouri Methodist Church.

Journalism faculty donned academic regalia for the march through the Journalism Arch to the church. For some, it was the first ceremony they had attended in many years. William Bickley, professor, said he had gone to a ceremony in 1935 when he received his master's degree and had attended the main Mizzou commencement only once, when President Harry Truman was honored in 1950.

"There is a trend throughout the country against this kind of commencement ceremony, but somehow Mizzou has caught fire. I don't understand it," Bickley said. "There is a national trend toward informality, and here they voted to wear caps and gowns." He shook his head.

"What's a ceremony in any civilization anyhow but a way to mark a transition, to help people through a change like death or marriage. This our coming of age, our entrance into the world of responsibility and work," Mike Weaver, BJ '72, philosophized.

He was sitting under a tree gnawing a fried chicken leg at the box lunch held after the ceremony.

In still another corner of the Campus, the Graduate School's hooding ceremony was in progress. It took place at the Livestock Center Arena. John Merrill, professor of journalism, who can always be counted on for a pun, said, "What could be more fitting? After all, they've been throwing the bull for several years." To the participants, however, the receiving of the academic hoods was a serious moment.

School of Law graduates received their hoods in a separate noon ceremony at Jesse Hall Auditorium.

At 3 p.m. the 130th Commencement of the University of Missouri-Columbia began. The band played "Pomp and Circumstance," and four columns of graduates streamed across the field from the east side of Memorial Stadium to the west side. The divisional processions were led by student marshals chosen by their respective deans.

A crowd of about 10,000 friends and relatives looked down on the procession. One proud aunt stood at ground level waiting for "her boy" to pass by. As Thomas Schaeffer led the engineers to their places in the stands, "Auntie" snapped a picture.

Baccalaureate and master's degree candidates were introduced en masse. Most stood silently, but the engineers gave a lusty shout that woke a baby sleeping in his mother's arms. He cried throughout the rest of the ceremony.

President C. Brice Ratchford told the graduates that they were unique in several ways. He said that the Class of 1972 was graduating after four years marked with turmoil on many other campuses. He congratulated the graduates on "expressing [their] intense feelings" in a more positive way at Columbia.

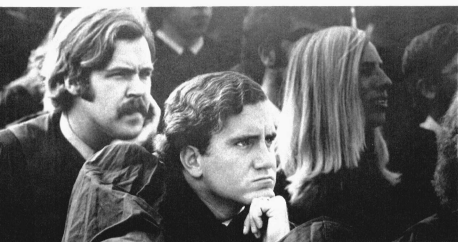
Candidates for doctoral degrees were recognized individually and walked across the platform which had been decorated with red, white and blue flowers.

Dr. Frank Williams, the new president of the Alumni Association, presented three awards. Wil-



(Above left to right) Alumni Association awards were given to Dorothy Sappington Holsinger (Alumnae Fund for Recognition of Faculty Women), William H. Byler (Alumni Distinguished Service Award) and William (Mack) Jones (Distinguished Faculty Award). The Three Honorary degree recipients were Albert Victor Crewe, Marjorie Katherine Carpenter and Herbert Blumer. Introducing those honored was Chancellor Herbert Schooling (right).

(Left) Stopping traffic, journalism faculty and students parade from the arch to the church at their 1st separate commencement.



liam M. Jones, professor of English, received the distinguished faculty award and \$1,000. Mrs. Dorothy Sappington Holsinger, assistant professor of physical education, received the \$500 Alumnae Anniversary Fund Award. Dr. William G. Byler, retired senior vice president and now consultant to the U.S. Radium Corporation, received the Alumni Association's Distinguished Service Award.

Ratchford conferred honorary degrees on Albert Victor Crewe, professor of physics and biophysics in the Enrico Fermi Institute and dean of physical sciences division of the University of Chicago; Dr. Herbert Blumer, a native of St. Louis who is professor of sociology at the University of California at Berkeley and captain of Mizzou's 1921 football team; and Dr. Marjorie Katherine Carpenter, an alumnae, who is a retired professor of humanities and dean of administration at Stephens College.

Newly commissioned officers in the armed forces were presented. In a reaction to scattered hissing, parents and friends gave the officers a standing ovation as the band played "Anchors Aweigh."

The benediction was pronounced and Commencement 1972 was over.

It may never be the same again.

Administrators insist that there will always be a main commencement, but most students "feel graduated" after their divisional ceremonies. It was hoped that the Warren E. Hearnes Multipurpose Building would be in use by commencement time this year. Administrators hoped that it would give more of a feeling of intimacy than the stadium. Cornwell said that they had hoped to have a reception there.

So the place will change next year, but ceremony will remain.

"I think it's important to the institution to identify the significance and importance of higher education to our society," Schooling says. "I am moved by graduations. Every commencement, I see the glow of accomplishment on the faces of parents, wives, husbands. I see children who are very proud of their daddy or mother. All that pride. It recharges your battery."

"We must turn the day into a festival," Cornwell says. "It's such a happy time. People look back at all the fun and the work and forward at beginning their careers and their lives." □





**The ceremony over,  
a brand new engineering graduate roars with  
exuberant St. Pat's spirit.**