Lost in Tribble

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http://humanitiesinstitute.wfu.edu/articles/lost_in_tribble

One of my favorite Wake Forest pastimes each fall is to sit in the courtyard between Benson and Tribble and pick out the freshman. They inevitably betray their identity not by their youth but by their utter bewilderment as they encounter a great Wake Forest landmark: Tribble Hall. Navigating Tribble Hall represents a kind of orientation into the campus community, on par with taking your first midterm or rolling the quad. Yet how much do today’s students know about the man who gave campus’ most notorious building its name? And perhaps more importantly, why should they care?

Harold W. Tribble (1899-1986), the sixth child of a Baptist minister, was a highly accomplished individual: a theologian, professor and Baptist minister. In the annals of Wake Forest history, however, he will always be remembered as the man who shepherded the University from its old campus, located in Wake Forest, NC, to its current location in Winston-Salem. The day after graduation in the summer of 1965 a fleet of moving vans descended upon the old campus, carrying books, tables and pencils alike to their new home in Winston-Salem. Jenny Puckett (’71),
professor of romance languages and author of a new biography about Tribble, spoke of the move as one of the most significant events in Wake Forest history. It was a highly controversial transition, as anyone who feels, as I do, an intense connection to the current campus can imagine. Thanks to his many contributions to Wake Forest, including shepherding the integration of the campus and the move to Winston-Salem, Harold Tribble looms large in the minds of Wake Forest enthusiasts. But the value of reflecting on Tribble’s life is not restricted to history buffs or diehard Deacons alone. The questions faced by Wake Forest community when it moved to Winston-Salem were universal rather than situational in nature and are valuable for us all to reflect on: How does environment impact identity? How does where I am affect who I will be? And perhaps most difficult of all, what is my place in the larger narratives unfolding around me? Throughout time and space humanity has wrestled with these issues, recognizing that our history brought us to our present moment.

Where we have been impacts who we are which in turns carries us into the future. This is true as much for institutions as it is for individuals. Dr. Tribble guided this university through a time of deep and difficult change. Today the Wake Forest community is entering into a new period of growth, with several new buildings recently completed or in construction around campus. Students, faculty and staff alike are wrestling with the implications of these developments for their daily campus life. As the Wake Forest community continues to grow and develop, we would all do well to remember Harold Tribble and the difficult evolution that brought us to where we are today, as we consider anew who we will become tomorrow.
To view pictures of Jenny Puckett’s lecture, including some showing the new campus under construction, visit the [Wake Forest University Humanities Institute Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/WakeForestUniversityHumanitiesInstitute/)

Audio of Puckett’s lecture: [Tribble Lecture 1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=example), [Tribble Lecture 2](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=example)

To read Harold Wayland Tribble’s biography in the Dictionary of North Carolina Biography click [here](https://www.dictionaryofnorthcarolinabiography.org/)

“Fit for Battle: The Story of Wake Forest’s Harold W. Tribble” is available in hard cover, soft cover and as an ebook through [BarnesandNoble.com](http://www.barnesandnoble.com), at the College Bookstore and from [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com). Proceeds from the sale of the book will be donated to the Wake Forest College Birthplace Society. It is also available as part of the [ZSR Library](https://www.zsr.wfu.edu/) collection.

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