

COVER STORY



Retired Hallmark Executive, Mary Ann Odom

For **TWU** alumna, **Mary Ann Odom, B. A. '59, Art**, it's all about creativity. Whether creating the campus cartoons for the Lass-O, supervising the international creative affairs for Hallmark or assisting her alma mater in many ways, the ideas flow and her eye is keen.

As a student Mary Ann was the campus artist for the Lasso-O cartoon section. Recently, she was invited by the university to revive some of those illustrations for use at the **TWU** table for the Denton Benefit League festival and fundraiser. For this event, various organizations create themed table tops that promote an idea or project. **TWU** invited Mary Ann to be a part of this by revitalizing her humorous drawings and incorporating them into the table decorations depicting campus life at **TWU (then TSCW)**. **Scroll down to read an interview with Mary Ann who has also been honored as a Distinguished Alumna and recent Commencement Speaker.**





TWU Alumni Connection: How did you come to attend **TWU (TSCW)** and what were your first impressions of school?

Mary Ann: "I had originally planned to go to a school in Missouri....a Christian College... and late in my high school Senior year several of my good friends were talking about **TSCW** and their plans to go there... so it was not too long until I changed my mind and decided to go to TSCW. Also, my aunt was a graduate of CIA and I admired her so... it just seemed like the thing to do."

"It was a wonderfully exciting summer getting ready to go off to college. They sent us a little booklet about what to expect, what kind of clothes to have, etc. I read and reread that book...I remember vividly those first

days.. the campus was beautiful and I lived in Capps Hall in what was referred to as the 'new part.' I don't think I recently read that we were the first class to have the beanies...I don't think I ever knew that. We ate all of our meals in Hubbard hall, got our clean linens from the campus laundry every week and all of our books were free. I was an Art major and the trek to Art building was at the opposite end of the campus from Capps.. a trip I made several times a day."

TWU Alumni Connection: How did you get started doing cartoons for the Lass-O? How did you get your ideas and did you have a favorite? Did you have any idea that one day those might be used in another way?

Mary Ann: "I was cartoonist for the Daily Lass-O my junior year...there was a new cartoonist every year. The character was always named "Tessie." And, the paper was daily... so I had to have a new idea every day. Recently, I got to see some of them and was amazed at their timeliness. Some things don't change."

"Also, it was like a little history timeline, i.e. when the Russians launched Sputnik, I did a cartoon for that. There was a lot of focus on dorm life...lack of sleep, exams coming up, late night studying and school events like the Lantern Parade, Corn Huskin', Redbud Queen, Stunts, Posture Week, etc. "

"When we were Sophomores, we experienced the name change to TWU. They had a huge bonfire behind Capps Hall.... what an exciting time that was!"

Recently, when I worked on the table for the Denton event, it really did bring back a lot of memories... and having to redo them was at first very intimidating for me. I wasn't sure I could even do them. But they actually turned out better. It was a fun project for me."

TWU Alumni Connection: What have you been doing since your retirement from Hallmark to feed your creative side? What other things are you enjoying in retirement?

Mary Ann: "Initially after retirement I got myself too involved in things... so now I am trying to cut back and it is not easy. I do want to do more things like paint, read, garden, and just enjoy life!"

Note: Shortly after this interview Mary Ann e-mailed to say that the painting she entered at the State Fair won a blue ribbon!

Read excerpts from the 2009 Commencement remarks made by Mary Ann

<http://www.twu.edu/documents/TWU-Commencement-Excerpts-2009-10.pdf>

