CHAPTER SEVEN

Early Years of Jacksonville State University
From 1966 to 1971

After the name change to Jacksonville State University had been passed by both the Alabama Legislature and the State Board of Education, the school remained under Board supervision until the trustees for the university were appointed. Members of the State Board of Education at that time were Governor Lurleen B. Wallace, president, Montgomery; Superintendent Ernest Stone, secretary and executive officer, Montgomery; Dr. James D. Nettles, Arlington; Ed Dannelly, Andalusia; Mrs. Carl Strang, Eufaula; Fred L. Merrill, Anniston; Victor P. Poole, Moundville; the Rev. Harold C. Martin, Birmingham; William M. Beck, Fort Payne; W. C. Davis, Fayette; and Cecil Word, Scottsboro.

The first diploma bearing the Jacksonville State University imprint was presented by President Cole to Susan Carter of Sharpsburg, Georgia, at the graduation exercises on January 20, 1967. More than 100 new freshmen had enrolled in the spring semester, and included among these first freshmen of the university were John Schooner and Cherry Worden of Huntsville and Janice Wilder of Birmingham.

These average costs per student per semester were listed in the 1967-68 bulletin.

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<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
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<td>Total basic fees (seven or more hours)</td>
<td>$130.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Room and board per semester (non-airconditioned)</td>
<td>$260.75</td>
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Less than seven hours, $15 per hour, undergraduate and graduate; out-of-state fee $75.

President Daugette's philosophy had included inspiring the students to strive for excellence in achievement, to equate mind and body, and to grow in knowledge and character.

President Cole's philosophy and objectives enlarged on the same ideas. The following excerpt was written by President Cole for the school bulletin.

Our Philosophy

This institution aims at excellence by promoting in its students a balance between facts and thought, between work and play, and between knowledge and character. It would equate life with beauty, achievement with happiness, and civic action with freedom's demands.

Our Objectives

1. To convey facts as a basis for thought.
2. To cultivate the will to work and the ability to relax.
3. To add to the range of knowledge within the framework of personal integrity.
4. To view life as an avenue leading to a world of beauty, both near and far.
5. To instill the principle that happiness is a product of achievement.
6. To develop civic intelligence and a desire to perform the duties of citizenship in keeping with local, national, and world demands.

Early in the 1966-67 term, the first year of the university, the students held a contest to select a new name for the COLLEGIAN, then edited by David Cory, and the name CHANTICLEER was selected.

Part-time jobs for students accelerated under the Work-Study Program. More than four hundred students earned $1.25 an hour for a maximum of fifteen hours a week. More than forty percent of the students worked outside of classes.

At the alumni breakfast held in March at the Tutwiler Hotel in Birmingham, Julia Snead of Centre presided. Other officers were Roy Gibson of Pell City, first vice president; Ceburn Hulgan of Crossville, second vice president; and Solon Glover of Jacksonville, secretary-treasurer.

In April, Terry Fain of Jacksonville received a fellowship for graduate study in mathematics at Vanderbilt and was selected for WHO'S WHO IN AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES. Another senior, Harold Hodges, received a National Defense graduate fellowship to study Chinese philosophy at the University of Iowa.

Governor Lurleen B. Wallace, Alabama's first woman governor, spoke at the May 27, 1967, graduation exercises. Two hundred and eight seniors received diplomas.
Governor Lurleen B. Wallace, Alabama’s first woman governor, spoke at the graduation exercises on May 27, 1967. Two hundred and eight seniors received diplomas.
On August 17, 1967, the regular session of the Alabama Legislature passed an act creating a board of trustees to manage and control Jacksonville State University.

Under this act, the trustees are appointed by the governor, by and with the advice and consent of the senate, and serve for a term of twelve years, except for the first appointments, one-third being chosen quadrennially. Two trustees are selected from the district in which the school is located and one from each of the other districts in Alabama.

Section 2 of Act. No. 239 states:

The governor and the state superintendent of education, by virtue of their respective offices, and the trustees appointed from the several congressional districts of the state, pursuant to Section 1 of this act, and their successors in office are constituted a body corporate under the name of "Jacksonville State University."

The student newspaper staff had been making strides to qualify the publication for university status from the standpoint of coverage and service, as well as in professionalism and concept. The CHANTICLEER staff in the fall of 1967 included students with journalism experience — Larry Smith, editor; Norman Brown, associate editor; Jerry Magnusson, circulation manager; Paul Merrill, feature editor; Danny Rountree, staff artist; Joe...
September 1967 brought a record enrollment, and twenty-two doctorates had been added to the university staff.

"Since achieving university status last November, Dean Theron Montgomery has searched every part of the country for doctorate degree holders," the CHANTICLEER said.

New doctoral additions included Ronald C. Attinger, Peter Ford, Beumoni Espina, and Fred Grumley in music; Harold Frey in business administration; Pu-Sen Yeh in engineering; Virgil Benson, Barry Cox, and Fred Allen Gant in chemistry; Thomas Cochis in biology; Anne and Charles Johnson and Martha Lois Smith in English; Calvin and Patricia Wingo in history; A. B. Hatch, appointed director of language laboratories, a new post; and Jerry Bryan Wilson in philosophy.

The Greeks did come to the campus. In the spring of 1967, Delta Chi, a men's fraternity, organized a colony under the sponsorship of Lee R. Manners, head of the art department. This group was chartered in the spring of 1968. The Epsilon Pi Chapter of Alpha Xi Delta, a women's fraternity, was also organized in 1967 and was chartered in March 1968. Hazel Hicks, assistant professor of business, sponsored this group. Another men's fraternity, Alpha Tau Omega, was making plans for organization in 1968.

Since that time, the following fraternities and sororities have been colonized and granted charters: Alpha Kappa Alpha, Alpha Phi Alpha, Delta Sigma Theta, Delta Zeta, Kappa Alpha, Kappa Alpha Psi, Kappa Sigma, Omega Psi Phi, Pi Kappa Phi, Phi Mu, Sigma Nu, and Zeta Tau Alpha.

Two local historians were in the news in December 1967. The History of Marshall County, written by Larry Smith of Albertville, and The Story of Scottsboro, by Jerry Gist of Scottsboro, were soon to be published. Smith had returned to Jacksonville after serving four years on the SAND MOUNTAIN REPORTER, an Albertville newspaper. He worked in the public relations office and was editor of the CHANTICLEER during his school days and is now director of financial aid. His wife, Brenda, also came back to school for her bachelor's and master's degrees.

The first Monday in June specified in the legislative act as the annual meeting date of the board of trustees, was in reality the beginning of the university. The first meeting of the board of trustees was held on June 3, 1968 in the conference room of Bibb Graves Hall. Governor Lurleen Wallace had died in May, and Governor Albert P. Brewer was her successor. Governor Brewer was unable to come to the meeting, but all of the other members were present. The Oath of Office was administered by the Honorable Robert Parker, judge of the Seventh Judicial Circuit of Alabama. Hugh D. Merrill was unanimously elected president pro tem.

The board approved the appointment of Houston Cole as president of the university and secretary of the board of trustees, and Solon H. Glover was appointed business manager and treasurer of the university.

The school of nursing had been added to the curriculum in the fall, 1967, session, and the board of trustees designated at the first meeting that the nursing school be named Lurleen B. Wallace School of Nursing.

Construction plans were announced at this meeting for the multi-story library, to be completed in 1970. The exterior of the building was to be in white Alabama marble.

State law enforcement officials came to Jacksonville to discuss the curriculum for the school of law enforcement in the spring semester of 1968. Federal funding became available, and the university added its resources to help solve the growing problem generally referred to as a "breakdown of law and order."

Mary Margaret Williams of Marysville, Ohio, was appointed director of the Lurleen B. Wallace School of Nursing in 1968. With a Ph.D. from Stanford and vast nursing experience, Professor Williams began the challenging work required to establish the nursing program at Jacksonville State University.

Alta Millican, head of instructional media since 1966, was named chairman of the newly created Division of Library Science and Instructional Media, the former head librarian, Doris Bennett, having accepted a position at West Georgia State.
College in Carrollton, Georgia. The 110,000 volumes in the library soon were increased by funds from federal grants.

Louise R. Clark, chairman of the department of home economics, received a doctor's degree in education from the University of Alabama that year. Col. Forrest O. Wells became head of the 2,000 member ROTC upon the retirement of Col. George Haskins.

The Alabama Federation of Women's Clubs completed the $25,000 scholarship endowment for the International House program, Mary George Waite of Centre, president of the organization, presenting the check to the university. Kitty Stone was chairman of the scholarship committee for the clubs of Alabama.

Students enjoyed dramatic readings by faculty members in Anders Hall that summer. Robert Frost's "Death of a Hired Man" was presented by Dean Lawrence Miles and Professors Pauline O'Brien, Charles Johnson, and George Teague. Truman Capote's "Among the Paths to Eden" was another reading by Dean Miles and Professors Tom and Sylvia Malone.

A historic city election made the news in September 1968 when Theodore Fox, a fifty-five-year-old school teacher and great-great-grandson of a slave, became a city councilman in Jacksonville. Fox was born and reared in a house on the fringe of the town square and was the first black to be elected in a predominantly white community in Alabama. Frank Sikora said in a BIRMINGHAM NEWS magazine article:

A teacher at Cobb High School in Anniston, Fox had a reputation among the educators in JSU, where daughter Sydney seeks a major in music... However, he was supported by all segments, merchants, housewives, salesmen and businessmen and some of the blue-collar workers. At the same time the "old guard" lent him their support because he was an "original," a native of Jacksonville. Some of the support came from the United Daughters of the Confederacy... Fox was well-known, well-liked, and qualified for the job, it was time to override the race barrier.

Fox still serves as a member of the Jacksonville City Council.

The Dance Company, organized in the fall semester of 1968 under the direction of Dariusz Hochman, featured talented Cindy Church, who was trained in classical ballet. Of this dance section, a part of the physical education department, Palmer Calvert, department head, said, "A major goal of all physical activity is to move efficiently with grace, dignity, rhythm and poise. The dance, in particular, lends itself to such development." Under the direction of David Walters, a musical ensemble participated in the December program, and Rudolph Lass played the piano solo "Barcarola" by Chopin.

Other fall entertainment included the Masque and Wig Guild play, THE CHINESE WALL, by Max Frisch. The play was under the direction of Janet LeFevre in the English department, and the three main characters were Kim Dobbs of Anniston, Terry McFall of Oxford, and Jim Tidmore of Moundville, Alabama.

At homecoming, 1968, the 172-piece Southerners performed. When organized, the marching band had had only forty-five members. Now, some two hundred Jacksonville State graduates were band directors in the Southeast, and these were the honor guests. Jeanie Bailey of Birmingham was Miss Homecoming, and of course, the Gamecocks won.

A number of waiting wives had stayed in Jacksonville until their husbands returned from Vietnam. The band and Ballerinas went to Birmingham to march in the Veterans Day, 1968, parade, and again at Christmastime, Jacksonville State University students provided a thousand toys for the three hundred children whose fathers were in Vietnam.

The October 1968 ALUMNUS summarized the second year of the Alumni Association under the directorship of Julia Snead. Active membership was increasing and the President's Club was organized. A montage of buildings planned or under construction was presented, the new board of trustees was introduced, and Dean Theron Montgomery's plans for rearranging the academic structure indicated a bright future for the upsurging student population. Dean Montgomery's statement was published in the ALUMNUS.

The University will move this fall into academic reorganization to facilitate the cohesiveness and flexibility essential to the university philosophy. The first major step will be the rearranging of the academic structure with the nucleus of the university being the College of Arts and Sciences. Within the tradition of great universities, the college of arts and sciences offers the broad, general atmosphere for creative thinking and intellectual development.
President Cole’s idea for recognizing classroom teachers with a Hall of Fame was announced on February 4, 1969, and plans for the Teachers’ Hall of Fame at Jacksonville State University, “to show appreciation for the classroom teachers’ dedication, hard work, and performance,” were under way. Beginning in 1970, each county and city school system would be asked to nominate a candidate, and a state winner would be selected in both elementary and secondary areas by judges not associated with education.

Under the direction of John R. Stewart since its inception, the Hall of Fame has presented each recipient with a plaque, and all names have also been placed on a permanent plaque in the Houston Cole Library. Thirteen elementary and thirteen secondary teachers from all over the state have now been inducted into the Jacksonville Teachers’ Hall of Fame.

A news release on March 5, 1969, carried the president’s announcement that Jacksonville State University was opening the new $1.5 million student commons. The building features classrooms, offices, a study area, a recreation area, and a snack bar. This building was named in honor of Theron E. Montgomery, Jr., by the board of trustees at the annual meeting of the board held on October 15, 1979.

Also in March of 1969, the Student Conference on American Government invited Senator Edmund Muskie, vice-presidential nominee for the Democratic Party, to speak. State Representative Hugh Merrill of Anniston and Circuit Judge A. B. Cunningham of Gadsden joined the Senator from Maine on the program. Again, high school leaders from over the state came to learn about the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of American government.

Governor Brewer came to Jacksonville for the
board of trustees’ meeting on April 18, 1969. This day was also Governor’s day on campus, and Brewer presented the first certificates in the new department of law enforcement, which had begun during his administration.

A new look in campus security took place in April 1969, when two Ballerinas donned policewomen’s uniforms. Security Chief James Jackson gave them authority to write tickets and do anything necessary to enforce the law. Policewomen could also enter a girls’ dormitory without running into the same problems a man would encounter, Jackson pointed out.

Today there are three women on the campus police force: Police Officers Glenda Brazzil, Susanne Grimes, B.S. in criminal justice, and Pearl Williams, M.S. in criminal justice. Virginia Sartain, secretary to the chief of security since 1970, handles a position that becomes incredibly hectic at times.

The chief and eight male officers complete the force. Jessie Williams joined the force in 1968, and John Maurer and Johnny Marquis have served in security for over a decade. Sergeant Charles Brindle, studying for a B.S. in criminal justice, Ricky Yell, M.S. in criminal justice, Gregory Dempsey, Jeffrey King, and Arner McDaniel are staff officers.

James Murray became chief in 1970 and served until 1981, when David Nichols came to head campus security. Chief Nichols, a former police chief at the University of Montevallo and Middle Tennessee State University, has also been a high school economics teacher and a deputy sheriff.

The ROTC became a cause of dissent on college campuses during 1969. With rumors about a volunteer army, there was a question as to whether or not ROTC training should be compulsory. Only the last two years of ROTC at Jacksonville were then voluntary.

"Freedom is not freedom from restraint," President Cole said at the time.

Although ROTC is not compulsory now, Jacksonville State University still gives serious consideration to the training of military officers.

In 1969, the SGA was instrumental in a modernization program on campus, where enrollment had by now exceeded five thousand. Seven hundred students hooked up for private telephone service, and refrigerators were provided on a rental basis from the SGA. President Steve Gurley and the other officers of the SGA, David Kinsaul, Barbara Starnes, and Phyllis Cook, worked with the school administrators and the telephone company to provide these new services in the dormitories.

"Jumping Jax" was the homecoming theme that fall. Two buildings were dedicated, Salls Hall, the athletic dormitory, and Anders Hall, formerly the “Round House.” Coach Wedgeworth, having served as head coach in three major sports, was honored for athletic achievement. Coach Salls had taken the football team to four bowl games and developed eight Little All-American players at Jacksonville.

Upon Coach Wedgeworth’s retirement, Rudy Abbott, in addition to his responsibilities as sports information director, assumed the position of head baseball coach.

The school announced on November 12, 1969, that annual perpetual awards would be given to outstanding seniors by Colonel and Mrs. C. W. Daugette, Jr., Mrs. Annie Forney Daugette, Mrs. Kathleen Daugette Carson, Mrs. W. J. Calvert, Jr., and the First National Bank of Jacksonville.

The graduating senior most outstanding in character and excellence receives the Clarence William Daugette medallion and gift. Other awards include the Annie Forney Daugette medallion and gift to the outstanding graduate in art, talent, and character; the General John H. Forney award, given to the senior who has distinguished himself academically in the field of military science; and the Mary C. Forney award, to the outstanding graduate in education.

Colonel Daugette said the purpose of the annual awards was to encourage quality and excellence, to develop ambition and desire to succeed, and to encourage efforts to achieve high goals in character and development. The first medallions and gifts were awarded in the spring of 1970.

As the university was growing in population and buildings, the term “Jumping Jax” was appropriate to describe the campus. A new nine-story dormitory for women, named for Ivo Sparkman, wife of Senator John Sparkman, provided rooms for 428 women. Merrill Hall, a classroom building, was to be completed the next year, and the construction contract on the library, the tallest academic building in Alabama, was awarded. This library would house three million volumes and would have an electronic hookup with the Library of Congress. Plans were
Ivo Sparkman Hall.
Mrs. Annie Forney Daugette, the "mother of the institution," received an honorary Doctor of Humanities degree at the spring graduation in January 1970. Mrs. Daugette was 94 years old.

also announced for the new sports complex to be built in the 1970s.

In the boom years of the 1960s at the university, buildings representing a total of $13,179,000 in construction were completed.

At the 1970 spring graduation, "the mother of the institution" was presented with an honorary doctorate in humanities.

"For seventy-one years, Mrs. Annie Forney Daugette has been laboring for the loving Jacksonville State University," the BIRMINGHAM NEWS reported on January 25, 1970.

The citation said of the 94-year-old matriarch, "Although the calendar of time has relegated her to the physical shadows, her spirit is as active and pervasive as ever."

Lawrence R. Miles, dean of admissions, received an honorary Doctor of Laws degree on this occasion. Miles, a member of the English faculty in 1947, had been elevated to the post of registrar three years later, and in 1957, was designated dean of admissions.

Professor Mary Lucile Chapman was notified of an honorary award this year and was listed in the 1970 NATIONAL REGISTER OF PROMINENT AMERICANS. Professor Chapman, who had received her M.A., and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Kentucky, had joined the history department at the university in 1962.

Christa Hill, from Roanoke, an ROTC sponsor and honorary cadet lieutenant colonel, became the first woman in Jacksonville State University's history to be commissioned through the ROTC program, when she became a lieutenant in the Army Medical Specialist Corps. Designed to attract qualified dieti-
Right — Kitty Stone was chairman of the scholarship committee of the Alabama Federation of Women’s Clubs when the $25,000 trust fund was completed for annual scholarships in perpetuity for International House students. President Houston Cole, Mrs. Stone, Director John Stewart, Mrs. Mary George Waite.
tians and physical therapy graduates, this Army program was a natural for this home economics major.

As 381 seniors graduated in May 1970, the board of trustees surprised President Cole with an honorary Litt.D. degree "in recognition of his devotion to the institution during the past twenty-eight years, and for his dedicated service to the state and nation."

The multi-million-dollar library was now moving upward story by story, and Mrs. H. A. Rowan, a next-door neighbor, watched the progress daily. She kept her binoculars handy and enjoyed keeping up with the construction work. This "unofficial foreman" is still interested in the activities next door and all of the programs and progress of the university.

Construction of the Albert P. Brewer Hall for law enforcement was announced in May of that year. Included in the plans was a crime laboratory to serve this area of Alabama.

Work also progressed on the business administration building, which was dedicated on September 13, 1970. The BIRMINGHAM NEWS of August 9, 1970, described the Fountain of Learning located in the lobby of the building:

Senior Vincente Rodilla and a team of ten artists from Valencia, Spain, designed this forty-four foot high mosaic in the lobby of the new $2 million Merrill Business Administration Building at Jacksonville State University. The figure of a slender young man represents the student who drinks from the fountain of learning. As he drinks, the false and unworthy — represented by tumbling, disorganized colors at the right — fall away, and he perceives the shining fundamental values of truth.

The business administration building was named in honor of Representative Hugh D. Merrill of Anniston, who was instrumental as a legislator in changing the name and status of the school from a teachers' college to a state college to a university. Merrill was also president pro tempore of the board of trustees from 1968 until 1980, the first twelve years of the university.

Although the year 1970 had involved much change and progress, deaths and retirements at the university brought a somber and reflective fall. Wright, director of financial aid for twenty years, retired in the fall of 1969. Earlier in the year, in April, Professor Marvin Anders had passed away, and Geneva Pyron in the business office had died in June. Professor Douglass Olsen had retired in May.

Innovative and enterprising students of change had tried out a number of ideas on Houston Cole over the years. When news of the president's retirement came, Jim Bennett, class of 1961, writing for the BIRMINGHAM POST-HERALD in August, 1970, said:

He could have boot ed out half the school but he didn't. Instead he went out of his way to transform the growing up process into a feeling of arrival. Nobody wanted to pull the ivy from the walls after that. They wanted to see more of it growing.

At the October 19, 1970, meeting of the board of trustees, a Selection Committee composed of the Executive Committee of the board and one other board member was appointed to screen applications for the presidency of the university.

Seven schools within the university were approved by the board at the October meeting. Replacing the departmental divisions would be the School of Library Science, the School of Arts and Sciences, the School of Business Administration, the School of Education, the School of Law Enforcement, the School of Nursing, and the Graduate School. The name of Ayers Hall was changed at the October meeting also — in 1964 the building had been named for T. W. Ayers, and the name was now changed to honor Harry M. Ayers, his son.

The first Master of Business Administration degree was received by Robert Trathen at the December graduation, and four graduates received a Master of Science in Guidance for the first time.

Following the recessed meeting on October 19, 1970, the board of trustees reconvened on November 23, 1970, in the offices of the Fitzpatrick-Chambers Corporation, Montgomery, Alabama.

The Selection Committee, Mrs. C. T. Fitzpatrick, C. W. Daugette, Jr., Pete Mathews, and Hugh D. Merrill, recommended the employment of Ernest Stone as president and Theron E. Montgomery, Jr., as vice-president for academic affairs, a new post prompted by the growth and the development of the new schools of the university. At this meeting, Ernest Stone was elected unanimously to succeed President Houston Cole, and Theron E. Montgomery, Jr., was elevated from dean of the university to vice-president for academic affairs.

As the end of the year approached, some members of the staff presented the retiring president with a rocking chair. His surprised reaction was, "Whose idea was this?"

"You can blame all of us," Julia Snead replied, "Why?"

"Because I still have a couple of days before I retire, and that's enough time to fire all of you."

This response was only half in jest, because he still comes to his office in the Montgomery Building every day. He delights the students, particularly the sons and daughters of former graduates, when they go by to see him. President Emeritus Houston Cole is still interested in and involved with his university.

Appropriately, Coach Charley Pell's football team that year went through an undefeated season and a bowl triumph, winning the Orange Bowl Classic in Miami in December. Yes, the Gamecocks made sure President Houston Cole, after twenty-eight years, could retire in glory on December 31, 1970.
The SGA officers of 1970 presented President Cole with a plaque just before his retirement. On the far right is Dr. Walter L. Ogilvie, professor of economics and advisor to the SGA.

President Houston Cole went to Miami for the Orange Bowl Classic in December 1970. The Gamecocks made sure this president would retire in glory. Capt. Bubba Davis, Alabama Department of Public Safety, is shown on the right next to the driver.
President Ernest Stone
1971-1981
Going to college was not easy during the depression of the 1930s. This son of Samuel W. and Belinda K. McDaniel Stone grew up on Sand Mountain in DeKalb County, Alabama, and he knew about hard work. The youngest son in the family also learned how to get along with others at an early age. Sometimes, in fact, he was able to avoid the usual consequences of not-so-good behavior because of his natural political ability.

Ernest Stone worked in the West Side Drug Store on the Square while attending Jacksonville, and often this likeable lad was invited home with his boss, Hoke A. Rowan, to have dinner, a welcome supplement to his usual fare. He also swept floors and sometimes studied in the bathroom late at night when the lights had to be turned off in the rooms. Through working hard and getting along with people, Stone was graduated from Jacksonville State Teachers College in 1933.

"Country" Stone, as he was called in college, did not have much time for socializing, but nevertheless managed to attract one of the school's Beauties. Kitty Gunn was studious and popular and involved in several school organizations. Their courtship began in Jacksonville, and a year after graduation, they were married on August 18, 1934.

In addition to a B.S. degree from Jacksonville State Teachers College, Stone received B.A. and M.A. degrees from the University of Alabama, he has studied at Michigan State University and Columbia University. He has an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from Samford University, as well as from the University of Alabama and Jacksonville State University.

Administration has been paramount in Stone's educational experience. His first job was as principal of Kilpatrick Junior High School in DeKalb County, Alabama. He then became principal of the Crossville High School and moved on to the superintendency of the DeKalb County Schools.

After serving in the United States Navy, he came to Jacksonville to teach in 1946. He worked as extension director for the college for a number of years and then was made director and superintendent of the Jacksonville Laboratory Schools.

Whether his nickname "Rocky" at the high school was wholly complimentary is debatable. A number of high school students have vivid memories of personal contact with the superintendent. But sometimes a beautiful friendship developed after a rather distressing visit to his office.

With a leave of absence from the college, Stone entered the political race for state superintendent of education, and won with an overwhelming majority of the votes. No doubt experience and maturity, added to his innate ability, led to this victory in the political flank of education.

These were the desegregation days in the public schools of Alabama, and the superintendent spent much of his time in court. By virtue of his office, he also served as a member of the board of trustees of the public universities in the state. Finishing the four-year term of office in 1970, Ernest Stone came back home to become the eighth president of Jacksonville State University on January 1, 1971.

Kitty Stone was also making progress in the elementary education field. She directed the Jacksonville Elementary Laboratory School, one of the best-regarded elementary schools in the area. Their son Bill attended the Jacksonville schools, and was commissioned in the United States Army when he was graduated from Jacksonville State University. Bill Stone and Sandra McCurdy from Jacksonville, childhood sweethearts, went to school together in Jacksonvile, and were married while they were in college. In the 1970s Bill Stone and his family came back to Jacksonville, where he was an ROTC instructor and finished his M.B.A. at JSU.

School days now involved the whole family. Sandra Stone completed her second master's degree at this institution, and the children, Staci and Steven, attended elementary and nursery school.

When "trick or treaters" at Halloween time came to President Stone's office, of course Gramps let Steven play host. No tricks were necessary, and Steven looked after his own interests with expertise.
Little brother Jeffrey was soon to gain a lot of valuable knowledge from his big brother.

President Stone is not only generous with his grandchildren, but is also well remembered for his liberality in dealing with university students. Rarely did a sad story or problem reach him last; his office was the first place students came. Occasionally he would not bend the rules, but tears usually produced a solution, sometimes to the consternation of a teacher or administrator.

Many honors have come to Ernest Stone, for his services in the field of education go beyond his occupation. He served as president of the Alabama Education Association in 1947-48, and received Alabama's Most Promising Educator's award in 1948. In 1960 he was appointed by the United States Government to study education in the Marshall Aid countries, and in 1969 to make an assessment study of education in Japan, India, and Israel. He received the first citation awarded for outstanding services to youth by the Alabama Congress of Parents and Teachers. In the seventies he served as chairman of the Alabama Council of University Presidents and as president of the Gulf South Athletic Conference.

A significant landmark was his induction into the Alabama Academy of Honor in 1973, and in 1981 he was decorated by the Secretary of the Army for distinguished civilian service.

The university, during the seventies, grew in size and recognition. The annual budget had reached $16,966,000, and the campus area was over three hundred acres. In 1981, sixty percent of the university's 264 faculty members held doctorates.

Ten and a half years as president of Jacksonville State University culminated the professional career of Ernest Stone, but not his individual efforts in persuading young people to get a college education. Since June 30, 1981, President Emeritus Ernest Stone has kept in touch with acquaintances all over the state, and is an able ambassador for the school where his heart has been since the 1930s.

The Ernest Stone Performing Arts Center was named for the president of that decade of Jacksonville State University's history, President Stone is shown in the foreground.
Presiding over the president’s home at Jacksonville State University during the decade of the seventies, Kitty Stone added a warm element to her husband’s presidency. From student at the State Teachers College to principal of the Kitty Stone Elementary School to first lady of the university, she has traveled with talent and dedication.

This educator and administrator has many accomplishments. Her innovative teaching methods and her work with the speech and special education program and the library learning center at the elementary school have added to the progress of elementary education. Her services to the Alabama Department of Education, the Alabama Federation of Women’s Clubs, and the Alabama State Association of Parliamentarians have also produced results. The Kitty Stone Endowment Fund for scholarships for graduate study at Jacksonville State University was established by the Alabama Federation of Women’s Clubs in 1969. She helped to raise from AFWC members a $25,000 trust fund for perpetual scholarships in the International House program. As a registered parliamentarian, her services have been many.

Honors given to Kitty Stone from this university are the Alumnus of the Year award in 1969 and an honorary Doctor of Laws degree in 1974. The city school board named the elementary school in her honor in 1982, and other recognition has come to this Jacksonville graduate who also has a master’s degree in administration and supervision from the University of Alabama.

Kitty Stone has entertained all visitors in the president’s home with charm and dignity, and she is always alert to the needs of her community and friends in Jacksonville.