

FAMU, 1969

Life of Service X X X X X

By MIRGE VANDERWALK

General Staff Writer

Mrs. Charlotte V. A. Gavin believes in the Lord, and in a very old tradition.

Picking up paper on the Florida A&M University campus is a tradition with Mrs. Gavin, who was born one year after the school was founded in 1887, has sort of grown up with the institution.

"Mr. Young (an early FAMU president) made us pick up paper," she recalls, "he taught us decency. If we dropped some he'd chase us down till he picked it up."

It's still a decent tradition, and Mrs. Gavin who has retained it all these 82 years and still picks up paper when on campus, was recently honored by FAMU President Dr. Ben Perry at commencement exercises.

But it wasn't an honor just for picking up paper entirely, but for a life of service to the school.

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THE FIRST time, Mrs. Gavin says, she ever saw FAMU was as a small child perched atop a load of wood her father was delivering to the school. His job was to supply wood to heat the buildings.

Then, she remembers, the campus consisted of only a few wood buildings, none of them brick.

Through the years, however, as Mrs. Gavin went to school at FAMU, all the way through what used to be known as Senior B, and then for more than half a century as an employee of the FAMU laundry, the school began to grow and mature.

While the school has grown and become a well known institution, Mrs. Gavin sees one thing that has changed even more — students.

"Students used to regard those who had charge of them," explains Mrs. Gavin. "They stood in awe of them, but students today don't give a rap for them."

But then she's quick to add she cannot say all of them have lost respect. "You can't put them all in one bag," she tells you.

"Children shouldn't dictate to parents," she continued. "Children today, they want to rule . . . it takes experience to rule."

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EDUCATION is very important to Mrs. Gavin.



A Buss for Mrs. Gavin

... honored by FAMU president

President Johnson also received a letter from Mrs. Gavin telling him that a Bible needed to be present at the peace conference.

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AND WHAT'S the thing, Mrs. Gavin has noticed has changed most about Tallahassee since she was born on Bel Air Road, two miles south of town?

Well, that the city's grown a lot is one of them. "Why you can get lost," she says.

But the biggest thing, Mrs. Gavin explains is the change in people.

"Uptown the other day, I noticed white people, both old and young, talking and smiling at me," she says smiling with the thought.

"There was once a big separation, now they're mingling, she concludes, "acting more as one."