

# Special FD Memories

## Freshman Perspective

### Female

By Pam Kelley  
W&L Freshman

Well, what to do about the big "F word" is no longer a dilemma: I received a bid for Fancy Dress. Where does it all go from here? As a freshman, I've absolutely no idea what goes on during Fancy Dress weekend; so I decided I would collect information on "F.D.", as it's called, and piece it together for myself.

I asked the brothers of the fraternity house I'm going to for F.D. to tell me what will be going on for the most part: I got a lot of stories about girl friend swapping and incidents that are

juicy tidbits for games like "I never." These stories basically hint at the underlying itinerary for the weekend, I think.

As for the formal itinerary, of course there will be a Thursday night concert, followed by "the big night on Friday," then the houses will part ways and create their own activities. These activities, combined with the informal itinerary, amount to what one person described to me as a "drunken fest."

Of course, after these enlightenments and revelations I have to admit that my previous, characteristically freshman visions of "moonlight and roses" have

somewhat changed. I am, however, looking forward to Fancy Dress. I mean I've got a great date, he's got great friends who we'll party with, they've probably got great friends, and we'll all probably all get along even better when everyone gets in the FD spirit. I am, however, a little skeptical about this date-swapping thing...

I also decided though, after all of my sleuthing that what will happen at Fancy Dress is the least of my worries, I mean I've got to get those shoes dyed to match my fabulous dress and think about accessories, possible nail polish colors and...

### Male

By Brian Byrd  
W&L Freshman

I've heard quite a lot about the Fancy Dress Ball and I've seen the posters and T-shirts, but I still don't know quite exactly what to expect next week. The closest thing I have to compare Fancy Dress to is my senior prom but from what I've heard, however, FD has been much more extravagant in the past than any high school prom. I mean we never had big name bands like The Fixx in high school, and none of our social events lasted from Wednesday until Saturday night as does Fancy Dress.

Some upperclassmen have also been telling me about the

tendency of students to not attend class on Friday. I think I'm looking forward to that quick break more than anything.

Yeah, when I think about it, nothing we ever did in high school could hold a candle to Fancy Dress.

Fancy Dress of course will be fine and dandy but my expenses next week will also be far above any high school Friday night costs I have ever paid. Sure, proms are expensive, but by the time I pay for tickets, dinners, flying my girlfriend in from Texas and other assorted expenses, I'll need to take out a loan.

It will probably be worth it all though. I guess I'll find out when it's all over.

## Sophomore Perspective

### Male

By Richard Martz  
W&L Sophomore

As we were walking to the party, I popped the question.

"Hey," I smoothly said, "do you want to go the FD with me?"

She looked at me and hesitated. As she was thinking of a reply, my mind scanned through the names of other people. "What if I don't get a date?" I pondered.

"Well, I don't know," she said.

"What do you mean you don't know," I exclaimed.

"OK, I'll go...I guess," she said.

"Wonderful," I thought. "My date to the biggest weekend of my life guesses that she will go with me."

"All right," I thought. "Two weeks to Fancy Dress. Time to

make dinner reservations, get flowers, buy tickets and get my tux cleaned."

Unfortunately, my date informed me that she had tests until Friday afternoon and would come up around 6 p.m.. Tests, right.

She ended up coming to W&L at about 7:45 p.m., we never ate dinner, I forgot to buy flowers, well, basically we hated each other.

The first thing she said to me when she arrived was that she had made other sleeping arrangements with a girlfriend of hers in another W&L guy's room. So my first Fancy Dress was off to a terrible start but the funny thing was that I really didn't care because my date wasn't looking too hot and the next stop was the fraternity cocktail party. Even funnier, after I had indulged myself at the

cocktail party she wasn't looking any better.

We finally made it to the ball at about 10:30 p.m. where I, ah, unintentionally lost my date. After talking to some friends of mine and dancing with other girls, I decided I should find her. When I found her she said that she was tired, had a headache and wanted to leave. I walked her to her friend's room and then proceeded to my fraternity house where I concerned myself with forgetting the evening.

The next morning my date showed up for brunch at the house and after eating heartily, left with her girlfriend to go to another fraternity party. After she left I decided that the morning deserved to be forgotten just as much as the night before.

I didn't see my date again until 10 p.m. that night at our band party. She only stayed about ten minutes and then left. It was the last I would see of her. But again I didn't really care because my beer goggles were setting in and there were plenty of other women around.

Overall though Fancy Dress was a great weekend, that is, when I wasn't with my date. I'm really looking forward to this year's FD. I can only hope that my date will be more bearable.

### Female

By Bernadette Kempton  
W&L Sophomore

The Second Time Around. From the very beginning, we all knew our sophomore year would be different. The excitement of being a freshman and the attention associated with being a new face on campus were gone. A crowd of entirely new faces had appeared, just when we thought we knew everyone.

Depressing as it was, we were no longer the center of attention, and we had to learn to deal with it. We adjusted also to no longer being part of a freshman dorm hall, with all our classmates within a short jog across the quad, and no longer being forced to eat our meals together in Evans. The good aspects of these "privileges" were obvious; we had been longing to be out of the dorms and out of a permanent ticket to the dining hall.

The catch though — and there always is a catch — was that we would no longer see many of the people who were once just down the hall, across the quad, or right downstairs.

The impact of this may have been minimal to some, but I know I had taken for granted the idea that we'd all still be together. Now I'm lucky if I see

some of the people who were on my hall last year once a week on the hill.

What does all this have to do with Fancy Dress? Well, to tell you the truth I'm not really sure myself. However, perhaps the sophomore's perspective may now be better understood. Thus far, all we've had to compare our W&L experiences to have been the relics of the freshman year. Looking upon Fancy Dress this year, some of the excitement must still be there.

Fancy Dress itself is supposed to be special, and the fact that your date is someone special lend themselves to creating at least a little thrill. I suppose a bit depends on your F.D. experiences Freshman year. I'll try not to hold that up as a standard of comparison, though, because it would be very difficult to top.

By this point, I think we've pretty much adjusted to the fact that the sophomore year is just "there" unless you make something more of it. Now I think we're ready to give Fancy Dress a whirl, and to see how, with a new attitude or an extra effort, we can make this year special in a way we had never thought it could be.



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# Junior Perspective

## Female

By Lori Richardson  
W&L Junior

It's FD season. Like the first day of hunting season, you can hear the dating calls beginning the week after Winter Break. W&L men search for the perfect date, the dates search for the perfect dress, the SAB wants the perfect decorations and all anticipate the perfect time. FD is one of the most memorable occasions at W&L. But, even so, something could go wrong.

My freshman year, everything that could have...did. First, the boy who I had wanted to ask me (a crush from the first week of school no less), didn't. The math test (not my strong suit) scheduled for 2 p.m. Friday was a nice bit of foreshadowing of the weekend to come as well. Next mistake, taking the plunge into one of the local beauty salons (using the word lightly) to get what I thought was going to be a manicure. One hour of gossip-about-people-I-don't-know later,

my nails were covered in horrible swirling pools of orange mud polish. It took another hour for my roommate and I to undo the damage.

It took about three girls to force on the previously perfect-fitting dress over a body that had been consuming various drinks for about three hours. A slight loss of hand-eye coordination may have made things a bit more difficult too. In addition, I made the dreadful mistake of wearing a full length gown with zillions of petticoats. Taking up most of the compact car in which we drove to Doremus made seeing out the front and side windows a true challenge for me and for the driver. NO joke.

The picture of politeness the entire week, my Jekyll/Hyde date must have been transformed by the sight of the dazzling spotlights and not-so-dazzling baby elephant that greeted us at the front door. Things went downhill...fast. To make a long story short, a friend of his ended

up walking me home. (With enthusiastic permission from my date of course!) I quickly went in search of my roommate at her date's fraternity house. The morning after overly-drowning my sorrows, I had my first Alka-Seltzer. (Ever try putting one of those in your mouth by mistake? Don't!)

I knew I never wanted to see Mr. Hyde again. He never wanted to see me again either. What a disaster! What happened next? Venturing to the fraternity house of a friend, I stumbled upon the boy I had been dying to have ask me. It turned out, he hadn't asked anyone. I was so excited to hear that. We danced the night away, which more than made up for the previous night's fiasco. Now he tells me he had wanted to ask me, but thought I wasn't interested. (Typical, huh?) This year, he asked someone, I think about a month ago. Lucky girl, I accepted in a heartbeat. This year, FD will finally be perfect.

## Male

By Wesley Goings  
W&L Junior

My freshman year, I was really fired up about Fancy Dress. That was all people had been talking about throughout the winter term. Before winter break, I gave a half-hearted effort at looking for a date, even though I knew all along that I was going to bring up my red-headed hometown honey. Sure enough, on Thursday of THE week, she showed up at the Roanoke airport. Friday night was great. However, Saturday just wasn't to be. She drank too much and proceeded to whine a lot, not that I did, so I gladly sent her on her way on Sunday. Still, not all things were that bad, if you know what I mean, and she had paid for the plane ticket.

Sophomore year, I was all ready to ask this one chick who I felt I owed something to (who will remain nameless). Then, when I got home from break, I had several people tell me that

she had done more than just sleep at Hampden-Sydney all that week. Don't worry, I wasn't that upset, but I did realize that I needed a date, and quick. I called up an "ole" buddy of mine who I thought I was going to have a fun time with. All she did was cost me a fortune while running around hugging everybody she saw but me. I probably didn't see her for more than several hours all weekend.

That now brings me to this year. Even though I've had some interesting experiences the last two years, I'm really excited about this one. I even asked a sweet little freshman girl before break, which is a miracle for me. In concluding, I have just a little advice for the underclassmen - watch out for the coppers. I'm not saying whether I am speaking from personal experience or not, well maybe I am, but they have been known to make a few arrests during the weekend. See you there.

# Senior Perspective

## Male

By Kevin Struthers  
W&L Senior

Before I matriculated as a freshman in the Fall of 1985, I had already heard about Fancy Dress. This was not just a dance, this was the *dance* and the social event of the year. My father, who attended Randolph-Macon College, Ashland, even made a road trip during the 1940s to crash the dance. I was prepared to encounter the most elegant and lavish event of the year: Washington and Lee's *Fancy Dress Ball*. *Carnaval* was quite a spectacle. I enjoyed the entire evening, but it wasn't quite what I had in mind as a "ball" in the Cinderella sense. What I encountered were a number of students attempting to awkwardly dance like their parents through a wall-to-wall inch of beer slosh, hazardous to all shoes and long dresses.

Gone are the days of "wet" Fancy Dress, perhaps to the chagrin of the University Cleaners. Beer was served at *The Dark Continent*, the Ball of 1987, but not on the main dance floor. Instead, it was served in what the SAB called a "Beer Garden." It was in this restricted area, on the balcony overlooking the new gym, that I had my most memorable Fancy Dress experience.

My former girlfriend and I were in the Beer Garden with what appeared to be every other person at the ball. Lots of smoke, lots of beer, lots of bodies. It seemed like a typical frat party, except everybody was dressed to kill. All present were trying in vain to look as dry and comfortable as they could, which was not easy in twenty-five layers of tuxedo and taffeta. Again, the floor was hazardous to all, except for those who like to take beer baths.

We had just arrived a few minutes earlier from a cocktail party where my date had maybe one drink, one and a half Cape Cods at the most. At this party she had a few cheese and crackers, but she really hadn't eaten anything all day. We were standing in the back of the balcony, away from the railing next to a wall decorated with bright splattered paint and a few bulky, awkward palm-tree-type objects. Everything was just fine, and then it happened. I looked over and I saw a mass of black velvet sprawled on the floor in the muck. She had passed out cold.

I tried to wake her, but it was to no avail. A couple of my friends picked her up and tried to walk her around a little bit, while I tried to figure out what to do. Trying to act casual, suave and debonair as one's FD date is

passed out amidst the entire student body is not easy. There was no place to walk - the front of the balcony was packed, and the stairs leading up from the gym floor were filled with two steady streams of thirsty bodies, all heading upstairs, of course.

Finally, two SAB security men came over and said, "Hey, she looks like she's had quite enough." So off they carry my date, with me trailing behind them as they walk out the back steps. Behind me followed three other couples who had joined us at the ball. This was not a good way to try to avoid being noticed. "Give her another drink."

"She ought to be fun tonight." "Look at her - go let her throw up, she'll feel better." That's all I heard as we passed what seemed like two zillion W&L students, staff and alumni. The entire time, I of course was trying to act concerned, yet still trying to maintain that "No, I'm not embarrassed" look.

As our entourage started down the back steps a rush of cold outside air blew up the stairwell. My date started to come to, much to my relief. As we sat down outside on the front steps of the Warner Center, a baby elephant present as part of the *Dark Continent* "atmosphere"

walked out of the building. My date later recalled, "Kevin, I swear, everything was just fine. I was standing beside you, then everything went black. I don't remember anything after we were upstairs. I just remember awakening to the sight of a large, swaggering baby elephant butt complete with smell and leather panty hose skin!"

As one might imagine, it was not a pleasant experience for either one of us. You should have heard what she said after she examined her \$300, beer-muck soaked, floor length black taffeta and velvet dress. Fancy it was not.

## Female

By Alston Parker  
W&L Senior

Fancy Dress-THE social event of the year which I discovered during February break is of international renown. I spent last week in Jamaica only to be asked by strangers on the beach what the theme for Fancy Dress is this year. (Don't worry, David and Liz, I did not divulge any SAB secrets). It is wild to look back to freshman year and see how my whole perspective on F.D. has changed. From being the eager freshman SAB member, rushing

to the gym to splatter paint the back wall, to now ducking into dark corners when I hear Liz Smith's or David Grove's voice because I have yet to sign up for SAB hours. Also, I remember dashing through Graham-Lees to see if my friends got "the bid" from their favorite senior crushes while this year my roommate is attending the Ball with her fiance (watch out, he was her date sophomore year, this too could happen to you).

The one thing that has not changed about F.D. is the good times had with my friends and the escape from academic

pressures it provides, even if it is for only 4 or 5 days. During Saturday afternoon parties, no one is worried about stats problems or history papers, the main priority is to kick back and enjoy the company of your friends. As a senior, with most of my friends running around like chickens with their heads cut off, looking for jobs or trying to figure out what is going to happen after June 1, this is going to be a great weekend to forget and have our last hurrah. The weekend is going to be the best Fancy Dress ever—but I don't know, it is going to be hard to top last year!