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# RINGING IN 100 YEARS OF TRADITION

BY LAURA WEDIN '84

## Following the creation of four class ring designs in one school year the ring tradition at Virginia Tech commenced with a bang.

Like many Virginia Tech traditions, a bit of legend, lore, and mystery surrounds the first class ring at Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College and Polytechnic Institute (popularly called VPI, now Virginia Tech). Although the Class of 1911 has typically been credited with introducing the VPI ring, recent research indicates a more complicated series of events. In *The Bugle's Echo*, a comprehensive history of the early Corps of Cadets, Col. Harry D. Temple '34 notes that the Class of 1911 ring arrived well after the class had graduated, citing a 1966 Techgram article based on an interview with Fred Kell Prosser '11. As class president, Prosser had promoted the idea of a class ring, but fellow class members remained undecided and so graduated without any class-designated jewelry, not even a pin as earlier classes had selected.

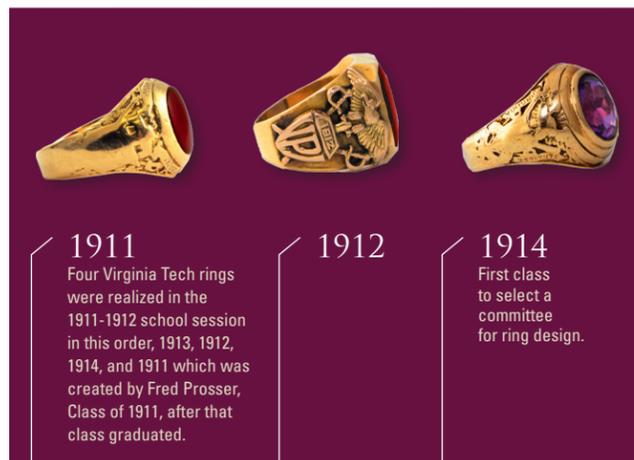
When Prosser returned to Tech the following year for graduate work, he wrote letters to fellow Class of 1911 members asking for their approval to create a designated ring, no doubt influenced by the established ring traditions at such schools as Virginia Military Institute (VMI) and West Point. A jewelry manufacturer agreed to produce the rings if Prosser provided the design, which he did in 1912 on his student drawing board. Months later, Prosser received the rings and faced the challenge of mailing them to his 1911 classmates who were already alumni. Interestingly, the Dec. 6, 1911, edition of the student newspaper, *The Virginia Tech*, the precursor to the *Collegiate Times*, includes its first advertisement for Dieges and Clust, a jewelry manufacturer in Washington, D.C. The bottom portion of this ad reads, "We made pins and rings for V.P.I. classes of 1913-1914," suggesting that the 1913 ring was on its way by late 1911. Moreover, an earlier edition of the newspaper reports that the senior Class of 1912 met on Nov. 4, 1911, and selected Spies Brothers in Chicago to manufacture the 1912 class ring. In light of the ad and news brief, it seems likely that the push for a class ring had become contagious within the Corps of Cadets' historically competitive classes.

What the 1911 ring really looked like was a mystery until the spring of 2009, when the Tanner brothers, Paul '45, Terry

'47, and Maurice '57 donated the 1911 class ring of their father, Paul Tanner Sr. to the Alumni Association. The concept of a unique ring design for each class is now clearly illustrated, either from existing rings or photographs from the ring tradition's inaugural years. For instance, the 1913 ring, which was probably the true first ring, was a metal-top signet style bearing no stone, depicting the class numerals, crossed sabres, and letters "VPI" with a pair of eagles on each shank side, a design reminiscent of the early rings of both VMI and West Point. The 1912 ring featured a square top with a flat stone and a one-sided design that incorporated an eagle, sabres, and shield bearing the class numerals. Probably worn on the pinky finger, as was the custom among military school graduates, both rings reflect class logo designs that appear prominently in the 1912 *Bugle*, VPI's yearbook.

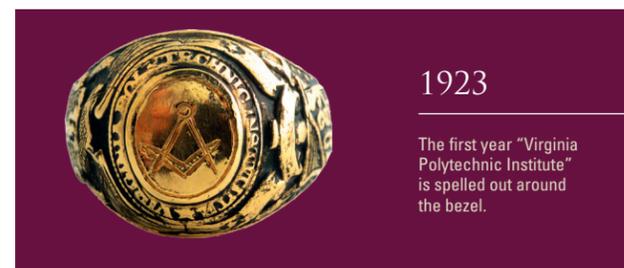


1913 Class Ring:  
Possibly the First VT Ring



In those early years, the ring design and selection process was entirely student driven. The Class of 1914 is credited as the first to appoint a ring design committee during sophomore year. The resulting 1914 ring—with its classic oval-shaped bezel and twin eagles, sabres, rifles, and cannon barrel behind a shield bearing class numerals—has served as the basis for all designs. The 1911 ring design is slightly different and seems to have provided the design template for later rings that remained consistent through the 1920s.

Despite its share of mystery and the speculation surrounding which class designed the initial ring or who had the original idea, the ring program at Virginia Tech experienced a banner 'first' year in 1911-1912 and celebrated the 100th anniversary with the design of the 2011 ring.

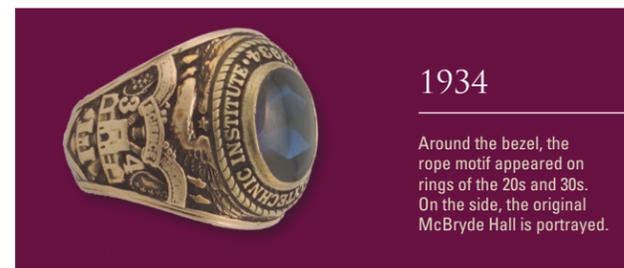


## 1920s

The Virginia Tech class ring tradition solidified in the 1920s, gaining more prestige and coming to represent, along with senior privileges and capes, a rite of passage for cadets. The ring design changed relatively little from year to year. A dog-eared shield bears the class year. "Virginia Polytechnic Institute" appears for the first time around the bezel on the 1923 ring; on earlier rings, the school name is on banners on the shank sides.

The Class of 1922 introduced women's miniature rings, which cadets often used as engagement rings, mimicking a West Point tradition. During the decade, the rings were manufactured by Auld's, Charles H. Elliott, and Bailey, Banks, and Biddle, although the miniature rings were not always made by the same company.

The Class of 1928 held the first ring banquet, when each cadet received his ring. A precursor to the ring dance, the banquet was held in the Old Mess Hall in early 1927.

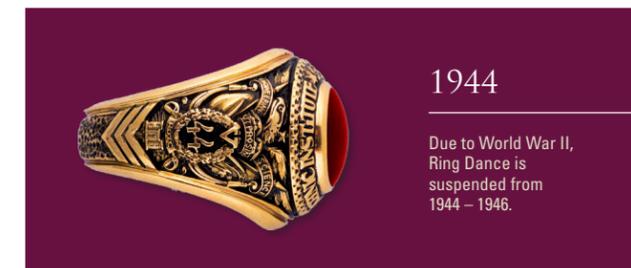


## 1930s

During the Great Depression of the 1930s, many VPI students

were unable to finish their schooling because of financial difficulties. Times were so trying that Gen. Tom Rice '34 pointed out that the money received by cadets from the government often meant the difference between buying a class ring or not. Col. Harry Temple '34 observed that a three-piece suit with a second pair of slacks generally cost the same as a class ring or an ounce of gold—about \$35.

Manufactured by G. L. Klatt, Herff-Jones, and Jostens (along with Spies), the rings of the 1930s featured a rope motif encircling the bezel, and the seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia on the shanks. The 1934 ring includes on its class side the original McBryde Hall. The Class of 1935 ushered in the first Ring Dance, held at War Memorial Hall on April 27, 1934, and began a Virginia Tech tradition still in place today.



## 1940s

The ring selected by the Class of 1940 introduced two new design features. For the border around the bezel, a linked chain representing class unity replaced the traditional rope motif.

As the United States entered World War II in late 1941, so did VPI. The effects of the war heavily influenced the college and its student body for the remainder of the decade. John Ginter '42 entered the service directly after graduation, and his ring—painted green so it wouldn't "shine up too much"—went with him. Many VPI class rings of the 1940s accompanied their owners on the war fronts.

In 1942, the Corps of Cadets petitioned bandleader Fred Waring to write a special song for Ring Dance. Waring's song, "Moonlight and VPI," with lyrics by Charles Gaynor, was introduced nationally on his NBC radio network show, broadcast from New York City on April 17, 1942.

That same year, the Class of 1944 chose "Victory" as the theme for its Ring Dance held in October. The year's second Ring Dance was necessary because of the accelerated school year preparing Corps members to ship off to war. Class President Henry Dekker '44 said the corsages for the women at the dance were made of war stamps, instead of flowers, to support the war effort.

The Class of 1943 raised money for a mobile blood bank. The Sophomore Prom, held in March 1943, was pressed into service as the Class of 1945's Ring Dance. Halted temporarily



during 1944 through 1946, the Ring Dance was welcomed back in spring 1947, along with a flood of new war veterans returning to Tech to complete their interrupted education.

but the numerals continued to be fairly small on the sides of the ring in the middle of the shanks.

Because of VPI's expanded enrollment, particularly of civilian students, ring dances were split into the Corps Dance and the Civilian Dance—each carrying out its own ring figure for the ring-exchange ceremony and each with strict guidelines for proper attire, ceremony, and decorum. A firmly established university tradition, the Ring Dance was in its heyday during the 1950s and was considered the major social event of junior year, perhaps of the entire university.

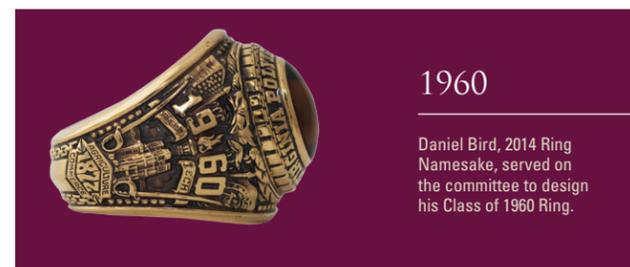


1958  
First ring to depict the War Memorial Pylons.

### 1950s

Consistent with the burgeoning prosperity across the United States, VPI experienced considerable growth during the 1950s, including an expanding campus and greater number of civilian students, most of whom were World War II or Korean War veterans finishing their education by way of the G.I. Bill. The VPI campus filled with trailer parks to accommodate the many married students.

Reflecting this change in the student population, the decade's ring design committees included civilian members-at-large. In addition, rings were designed with a side dedicated to the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets (VTCC) and a side dedicated to the Civilian Student Body (CSB), with the appropriate initials placed on the lower part of the ring's shanks. Jostens produced the majority of the rings during the 1950s, followed by Herff-Jones. The 1951 ring was made by Balfour, and Dieges and Clust made the 1959 ring. Despite the rings' different manufacturers, their design and bold look remained fairly consistent throughout the decade. All rings of the 1950s are of formidable size, and their designs feature the traditional eagles, flags, and crossed sabres. Although the depiction of Burruss Hall, Ut Prosim, and 1872 had become fixtures on the VPI ring, the 1958 ring was the first to depict the War Memorial Pylons, whose construction had taken place during the decade. With the Class of 1952, the depiction of class numbers expanded to the full four digits,



1960  
Daniel Bird, 2014 Ring Namesake, served on the committee to design his Class of 1960 Ring.

### 1960s

Science led the way during the "New Frontier" of the 1960s, including the U.S. space race and the threat of nuclear war. In 1961, the Highty-Tighties proudly marched in the inauguration parade of the nation's vibrant, young president, John F. Kennedy. In less than three years, Kennedy's assassination would shake the nation. The newly cast Corps cannon was named Skipper in his honor.

In 1962, T. Marshall Hahn Jr., at age 35, became the youngest university president in Virginia Tech history. Hahn led major sweeping changes to the campus, academic, and administrative structures. In 1964, Corps membership was made voluntary, and all academic courses were opened to women.

Enrollment almost doubled in the decade, growing from 5,747 in 1960 to 11,028 in 1969. The ambitious building campaign on campus included the construction of eight new residential halls, six new academic buildings, Dietrick Dining

Hall, Rector Field House, Cassell Coliseum, and Lane Stadium. Many saw the changes as revolutionary, but this growth would eventually help elevate the university to its international status today. Virginia Tech class rings reflected this era of change with a bold, new look and larger size. With the exception of the 1969 ring, the rings of the 1960s have large, divided class numbers: the numeral 19 on one side and the two-digit class year on the other side of the shank. The 1966 and 1969 rings used the class numbers to form the chain around the bezel. Despite these changes, the rings' traditional elements—the eagle, sabres, university shield, and flags—were prominently featured.

Competition was fierce for the coveted Tech ring account. Five companies—Balfour, Herff Jones, Jostens, John Roberts, and Dieges and Clust—all won bids to manufacture the rings during the decade. For the Class of 1966, a 23 pennyweight (dwt) ring, the largest available, cost about \$60.

The tradition of the Ring Dance continued to reign supreme as the event of junior year. The dances featured well-known orchestras led by Stan Kenton, Larry Elgart, Count Bassie, and Duke Ellington. The War Memorial Gym served as the location until the event was moved to a newly renovated Squires Student Center in 1969 for the Class of 1970's dance. A constructed version of the class ring, large enough to walk through, became a focal point at the dances during the 1960s. Couples would pass through the center of the ring and then pause for a photograph and kiss. Dance committees spent months on the design and creation of these oversized, detailed rings.

Toward the end of the decade, a changing culture created the need to spell out the attire and protocol for the dances. The Class of 1969 Ring Dance guide, for example, clearly states that mini-skirts were not acceptable at either night of the festivities. Although the Vietnam conflict began to escalate in the late 1960s, followed closely by the counterculture movement, the deep traditions established by the Virginia Tech class ring and dance provided a source of pride and unity for the university's students, both cadet and civilian.



1971  
First ring to depict the Skipper Cannon.

permeated by apathy, cynicism, and waning school spirit. The last year of the decade ended on a similarly sour note with the Iran hostage crisis.

At Virginia Tech, the Corps of Cadets began accepting female cadets in 1973, three years before the service academies. As civilian enrollment rose at the university, Corps numbers dropped; subsequently, ring design committees during the decade were comprised predominantly of civilian students.

Companies producing rings during the 1970s were Balfour, Jostens, Herff-Jones, and John Roberts. Virginia Tech rings continued to get larger, and class years were depicted on both sides of the ring shanks throughout the decade. The 1971 ring was the first to depict the Skipper cannon.

Departing from the design of the typical Virginia Tech ring, the 1977 ring touted a "futuristic housing," and the designs of the 1978 and 1979 rings featured a more angular, stylized look. Elements on the ring, however, remained amazingly traditional during the decade. Women's fashion class rings, which had begun to appear in the late 1960s, became more popular in the 1970s. Signet rings for both men and women were also introduced.

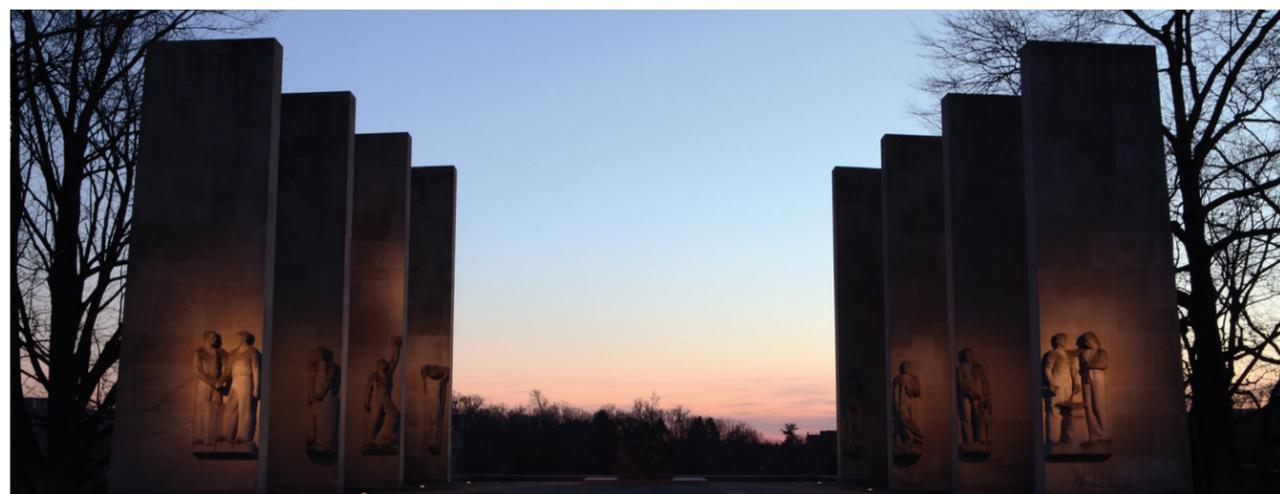
Since 1934, ring dances had been held in the War Memorial Gym, except for a few civilian ring dances in the mid-1950s that had been held in Squires. Beginning with the Class of 1970, ring dances moved to the newly renovated Squires Student Center. Orchestra bands for the formal night of the dance continued to be a highlight throughout most of the 1970s. Some of the popular acts that performed at the ring dances during the decade included Archie Bell and the Drells, Little Anthony and the Imperials, the Chairmen of the Board, the Buckingham, and Doc Severinsen. Despite its declining enrollment, the Corps of Cadets played a major role in sustaining the traditions of the class ring and the Ring Dance during the 1970s. In fact, some cadets from the decade viewed the ring as a stabilizing anchor in a turbulent time.

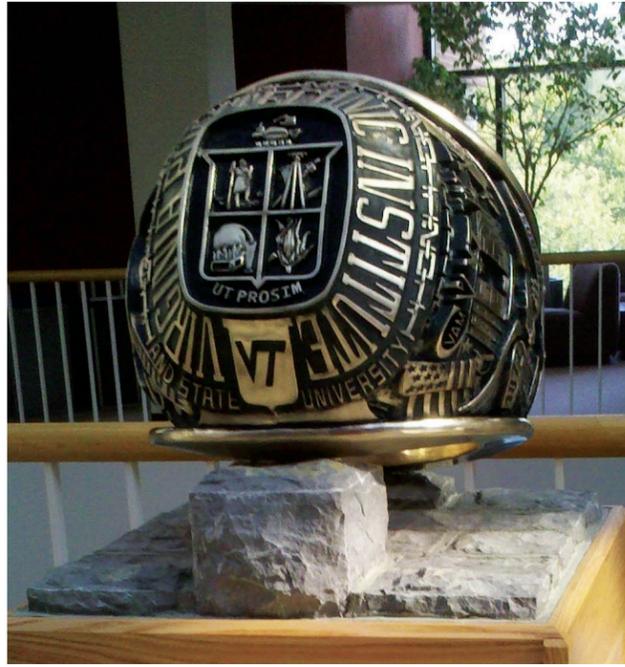


1984  
Uses hemlock needles to form the chain around the bezel. Hokie stone is modeled around the palmside of the ring.

### 1980s

The rapid enrollment growth of the 1970s slowed in the 1980s, but Virginia Tech continued its transformation into a larger and more diversified university that included a school of veterinary medicine. The Blacksburg Transit, or "BT," established in 1983, expanded the transportation options to campus as the off-campus student population began to exceed the campus housing capacity and the number of student automobiles overwhelmed the unpaved, gravel parking lots. The Gobbler mascot also seemed to evolve alongside these





The Centennial Big Ring located in Squires Student Center, 2nd floor. A gift from the Class of 2011.

changes, from the long-necked Gobbler of the 1970s to a shorter turkey mascot in 1982 called “The Hokie,” to the current HokieBird, which premiered in fall 1987, the same year that Coach Frank Beamer ’69 took over as head coach of the football team. The now-familiar “VT” logo premiered in 1985, and the use of “Fighting Gobblers” shifted to “Hokies.”

After brief experimentation with changing the shape of the ring housing in the late 1970s, the ring eventually returned to a more traditional look. The 1981 and 1982 rings had no traditional chain around the bezel. The 1984 ring had a chain cleverly designed of evergreen needles around the bezel, representing class unity and growth with the planting of a spruce tree next to Squires. Traditional elements still had a major presence, but the depiction of new campus buildings, mountains, a rising sun, or the Cascades reflected a shift to making the ring more personal to the group. A logo design unique to the class also became part of the ring design and tradition during this decade.

With the addition of “and State University” to the university’s official name, “VPISU” began to appear on rings, either on the shank side or on the bezel. Events that had impact on students were symbolized, such as the appearance of Haley’s comet on the 1986 ring. Lives lost in the 1986 space shuttle Challenger accident are symbolized with seven stars on the 1988 ring. On the 1989 ring, the word “STARK” appears as part of the sabre handle, in memory of the 37 American sailors who lost their lives aboard the USS Stark in 1987. Also on the 1989 ring, a peach motif represents the 1986 Peach Bowl victory—the first bowl game symbol to be depicted on a Tech

class ring. The phrase “Beat UVA” also appears on this ring.

Signets and women’s fashion rings had first appeared in the 1970s, but the 1980s saw a large expansion of the class ring collection with offerings of many different styles of signet rings for men and women, as well as women’s fashion rings. Jostens made the bulk of the rings of the decade, with Balfour making three years and Herff-Jones making the 1980 ring. Held at Squires Student Center, Ring Dance continued to be a large, anticipated event on campus. Friday night was the formal night with the ring ceremony and fireworks, while Saturday was a semiformal dance. Bands such as the Kings of Swing and Voltage Brothers were popular. Themes for the dances, such as 1982’s “An Evening in Camelot,” 1987’s “Moonlight over Manhattan,” or 1989’s “On the Rivera” reflected the desire to create a glamorous, escapist departure from the everyday in Blacksburg.

Amidst the “me” decade and waning school spirit, the class ring tradition at Virginia Tech managed to survive the 1980s intact with changes that are still in place today.



### 1990s

Even with a steady decline in enrollment in the Corps of Cadets through the mid-1990s, the ring tradition at Virginia Tech stayed strong, thanks in part to stable gold prices and a prosperous economy for much of the decade.

Competition was at an all-time high for the ring contract. ArtCarved, Herff-Jones, Jostens, and Balfour all made rings in the 1990s, with a different company supplying rings for each class year. In 1998, ArtCarved finished out the rings for the decade and continued into the 2000s, eventually being absorbed into Balfour in 2004.

In 1993, the advising of the class system, starting with the Class of 1995, transferred from Student Activities to the Alumni Association, which hired student programming staff to specifically assist the ring design committees with the management of their ring contracts.

Several new ring design conventions were established in the 1990s. A square-shaped bezel with a bold university spellout dominated rings of the decade. The “honor point,” a shield-shaped emblem that could be customized with a Corps company letter or a variety of other choices, became standard.

A stadium-top bezel was first offered by the Class of 1991, but it didn’t become a standard option until the end of the decade. Although the traditional ring was still the top choice

among male students, it was overshadowed by the number and variety of fashion class rings available for female students.

By the 1990s, the purpose of the rings’ shank sides had been firmly established. The university side, which did not include a class year, depicted the heritage of the university with traditional elements such as the eagle, flags, seal, Burruss Hall, and the Pylons. The class side displayed the class year.

Both sides of the rings of the 1990s are complex, bearing many layers of elements. The class sides are full of hidden, humorous, or pop-culture elements. The 1994 ring, for example, cleverly hides the word “MOO” in the grass. The front of a Blacksburg Transit bus appears as a window of Newman Library on the 1995 ring. And a legendary Coke bottle—in reality, a marker light that was later removed—sits atop Burruss Hall on the 1991 and 1995 rings. Gumby, the popular claymation figure, appears next to Squires Student Center on the 1997 ring. Elements such as mountains, “Beat U.Va.,” and the Skipper cannon appear on the 1995 ring, as well as later rings of the decade. Starting with the 1998 ring, the university shield was engraved inside the ring, a feature that continues today.

With the growing success of the Hokies football team, icons depicting bowl games started to appear regularly on the rings beginning in the mid-1990s. The iconic HokieBird, which premiered as Tech’s mascot in 1987, was first depicted on the 1992 class ring and has appeared on nearly every class ring since. During the decade, digital artwork and utilization of CAD design for the ring molds transformed how the ring design was implemented. The Class of 1998 had the first digitally created class logo. Similarly, Ring Premiere evolved into a large, well-attended multimedia show held in Burruss Hall, with computer animated video replacing carousel slide projections toward the end of the decade.

Marketing the ring using the most current trends became an important aspect of the ring committee’s work. Free T-shirt giveaways connected with the Ring Premiere began with the Class of 1998.

During the renovation of Squires, beginning in 1989, Ring Dance moved to Cassell Coliseum for the classes of 1990-1992. Re-opening in 1992, the renovated Squires appears on several rings of the decade. In the early 1990s, a banquet night replaced one of the dance nights, with the formal dance on Friday and banquet on Saturday. By 1996, the dance night had moved to Saturday night.

Beginning with the Class of 1991, a university president or distinguished alumna was honored as namesake of the ring collection. Dr. Julian Burruss, who served as university president from 1919 to 1945, was named the first ring namesake. Other university presidents recognized in the 90s include James D. McComas in 1996 and William A. Lavery in 1997.

Distinguished Corps alumni who were honored as namesakes during the 1990s include Gen. Thomas D. Richards ’56 in 1992; Earle D. Gregory ’23 in 1993; Charles Gordon Sr. ’42 in 1995; and Henry J. Dekker ’44 in 1998.



### 2000s

Bookended by the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks and the Great Recession, the 2000s have sometimes been called the “Lost Decade.” At Virginia Tech, Gen-Y students—or Millennials—were team-oriented and civic-minded, enacting a shift from “me” to “we” against a backdrop of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. As great numbers were called to service and profound changes occurred across the country, the Hokie Nation and its ring tradition flourished.

Not surprisingly, the decade’s ring designs became not only more serious in theme, but also less cluttered and more unified. The consistent look of the traditional ring’s bold bezel and housing resulted from the university’s long-standing partnership with ring manufacturer ArtCarved/Balfour.

Commanding respect on the rings of the 2000s are the U.S. and Commonwealth of Virginia flags, the Pylons, 1872, Ut Prosim, Burruss Hall, and the sabres. In addition, iconic emblems of campus life, such as the HokieBird and its tracks, Torgersen Bridge, Lane Stadium, “Beat U.Va.,” the Skipper cannon, and the Flaming VT—a tradition of the Corps’ Hotel Company—appear on nearly every ring of the decade.

In a more unique depiction, the hourglass on the 2007 ring represents the playing of Metallica’s “Enter Sandman” as the football team runs onto Worsham Field.

The Class of 2009 ring was the first to depict the April 16 tragedy—a VT memorial ribbon nestled in the Drillfield oval on the class side; the words “We Will Prevail” on the university side.

During the decade, the explosion of new technology in video and digital communications affected every aspect of the class ring design process, from design implementation, websites, email, animation technology, video-to-DVD format, and wireless Internet, to marketing techniques through social networking sites like Facebook.

Amidst the information-overload decade, marketing became a crucial part of the ring design process. The class logo became a branding tool to uniquely identify each class and was usually incorporated into the ring design. The Ring Premiere presentations added digital animation of the ring and more video. In 2001, ring brochure websites that could be easily shared with parents and others were introduced. The Class of 2008 was the first to include a DVD of Ring Premiere videos with the hard-copy brochure.

Dance weekends throughout the 2000s continued to be elegant, well-attended affairs held at Squires Student Center, utilizing newer technology, visuals, and lighting with each

passing year. University President Charles W. Steger has presided over the ring figure and presentation since taking office in 2000.

Former university presidents T. Marshall Hahn Jr. (2003) and Paul E. Torgersen (2006) were among the ring namesakes in this decade.

Despite the challenges and conflicts of the 2000s, Virginia Tech's ring tradition thrived, drawing from and contributing to the traditions that continue to keep the Hokie Nation strong.



2011

Celebrates 100 years of the ring tradition. First ring to offer the option of genuine Hokie Stone as a stone choice.

### 2010s and next 100 years...

The start of the current decade ushered in planning to celebrate the first 100 years of the Virginia Tech class ring tradition and new ways to connect with class members.

The single greatest impact on the rings of this decade has been the classes' widespread use of social media—Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter—to market their ring, Ring Premiere, and Ring Dance. The Class of 2011 posted videos of its ring premiere on YouTube, and the Classes of 2012 and 2013 created their own YouTube channel to display their videos. Nonetheless, oldschool methods, including posters around campus, A-frame signs on the Drillfield, and table cards at the dining centers, still remain effective ways to communicate to a class of more than 5,000 students.

While each ring continues to include long-held Tech traditions, newer ones have made their way onto the rings' class side. The 2010 ring features the "key play," a common practice at Hokie football games during which fans jingle their keys before an important play. In a similar vein, the 2012 ring depicts the Lane Stadium tunnel and the words "Start Jumping" which alludes to fans jumping to "Enter Sandman" as the team takes the field. Considerably more solemn representations also appear on the rings since the April 2007 campus tragedy. The 2010 ring was the first to depict the April 16 Memorial in front of Burruss Hall, and each ring since then has included an element that pays tribute to the 32 students and faculty who were lost.

The Class of 2011 fully celebrated the centennial of the ring tradition by selecting President and Mrs. Charles W. Steger, both alumni of Virginia Tech, as the namesakes of the class's ring collection. In addition, a special video, "Virginia Tech: A Century of Tradition," was produced and features several Corps alumni, beginning with Maj. Gen. W. Thomas Rice '34. The video can be viewed online at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=BK5RvZSeCDQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BK5RvZSeCDQ).

For the Class of 2011 ring, actual Hokie Stone in either a light or a dark shade was made available for the first time as a gem choice. The lower part of the rings' shanks also features a depiction of Hokie Stone, an element that continues on current rings.

The theme of the 2011 Ring Dance, "Moonlight and VPI," recognized the heritage of the Fred Waring song played at every ring dance since 1942. Attendance at the dances increased, but because of the new enforcement of building capacity, the Class of 2011 was the first to impose limits on attendance. As a result, tickets, though still free, were issued prior to the event and limited to juniors.

As its class gift, the Class of 2011 commissioned a large cast bronze of the Centennial Ring, which was dedicated in September 2010. Housed in the atrium of Squires Student Center on a custom-made wood base with Hokie stone, the "Big Ring" depicts a re-created 1911 ring on one side and the 2011 ring's university side on the other.

In addition, since November 2011, the ring tradition has been celebrated daily by way of a wrapped Blacksburg Transit "Ring Bus" proclaiming "Wear the Tradition" alongside a depiction of the Centennial Ring. Withstanding the ups and downs of gold pricing and a century of change, the Virginia Tech class ring, like the Corps of Cadets, continues on a strong course for another 100 years of tradition.

To learn more, go to [www.vt.edu/classring](http://www.vt.edu/classring).

## Hokie Gold Legacy Program

The Hokie Gold Legacy Program was established as a Class of 1964 anniversary program to have gold from donated Virginia Tech alumni class rings included in future class rings. On May 3, 2012, the inaugural melt was held at the Kroehling Advanced Materials Foundry (also known as VT FIRE), a laboratory for students in Materials Science Engineering. A small portion of gold from this melt was reserved to include in future Hokie Gold melts.

Each year, some donated Hokie Gold will be passed down to the next class in perpetuity. For more on Hokie Gold, go to [www.alumni.vt.edu/classrings/hokiegold](http://www.alumni.vt.edu/classrings/hokiegold)

# CLASS OF 2016 RING COLLECTION

To the Class of 2016,

This premiere marks the approximate midpoint of our college career. Many of us have expanded our horizons immensely in the past two years experiencing all Virginia Tech has to offer. No two stories are alike just as no two Hokies are identical. The 2016 Ring Design committee used this as inspiration in creating the Class of 2016 ring.

Throughout the team's design process, we worked to create a ring that represents our time as a class at Virginia Tech. This ring signifies tradition, both new and old, creating a tangible time capsule for the Class of 2016. Our vision was one of simplicity and timelessness, to design a ring that would endure the test of time in an elegant manner. Not only are we honored to have been selected for this task, but we are thrilled to reveal the final product of our hard work.

The ring serves as a reminder that while we are each unique, we are bonded together by the traditions and community spirit of this great Hokie Nation. When you first wear your ring at Ring Dance, make sure to reflect on the traditions that make the occasion so special. You are joining an exclusive group of Hokies and further forging the perpetual connection of spirit and joy. Be proud to be a part of over 100 years of tradition!

Sincerely,



MATTHEW MERRITT  
Ring Design Chair  
Class of 2016

To the Class of 2016,

Throughout the past two years we have been through numerous academic trials, and thrilling sporting events, while also having the opportunity to take a couple days off to play in the snow. These are just a few of the many things that we will remember from our time here that have helped to shape our Virginia Tech experience. I am deeply moved that I have been able to share these experiences with our Class.

It is my honor and privilege to invite you to celebrate one of Virginia Tech's longest standing and beloved traditions, that of the Class Ring. Each class that comes through Virginia Tech has their own distinctive ring that is redesigned each year. The ring embodies the experiences we have all shared as Hokies. A testament of our time here and of our bond to this university. Wearing the tradition of the class ring, as students and then later alumni, is a special way of displaying the pride and love we have for Virginia Tech.

Our class motto, "Ignited by Ambition, We Triumph", serves as another representation of the willingness of our class to push farther and reach for new horizons in the spirit of *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve). Our class ring will unite us together as the Class of 2016, and connect us with past, present, and future Hokies. I hope that you all will take the opportunity to participate in this rich tradition and show your passion and loyalty to your alma mater.

With the spirit of 2016,



LUKE CARROLL  
President  
Class of 2016

VIRGINIA TECH

CLASS OF 2016

*Ring Premiere*



OCTOBER 7, 2014  
Burruss Hall Auditorium at  
8:00 P.M.  
Free Admission

**A ring for every budget!**  
2016 Class rings are  
available for as  
low as \$239.

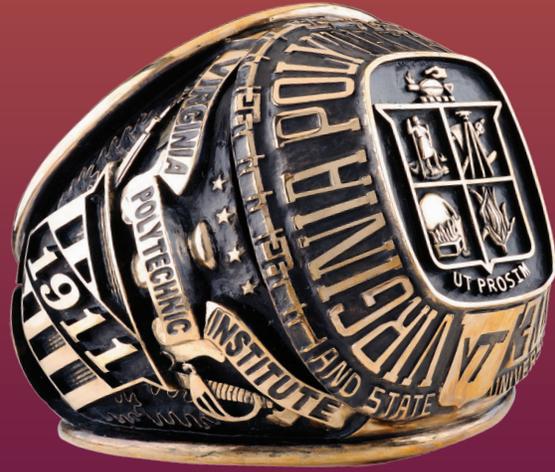
**Purchasing a  
Virginia Tech  
Class Ring**

**Undergraduate Eligibility:**  
Students who have achieved junior status (60 or more hours) are eligible to order a Virginia Tech Class ring. Students in 5-year programs have the option to purchase the ring of the Class they entered with or a ring that reflects the year of their graduation.

**Graduate Eligibility:**  
Graduate students must show degree application status or need verification from an advisor that they will complete their degree within the year of the ring year request. Please include name of advisor with application request.

Juniors may order their ring after their class' Ring Premiere on October 7. Ring Try-on week, February 3-6, 2015, allows those juniors who have ordered a ring by December 2014, to try on their ring to check size and fit and make any needed revisions to their order. Rings ordered by juniors will not be available until Ring Delivery Week, March 24-27, 2015. Ring Sales, Ring Try-ons and Ring Delivery are held at the Williamsburg Room of Squires Student Center.

For more information:  
[www.vt.edu/classring](http://www.vt.edu/classring)



*Wear the*  
**TRADITION**  
[www.vt.edu/classring](http://www.vt.edu/classring)

CLASS MOTTO:  
*AMBITIONE INCENSI VINCIMUS*  
IGNITED BY AMBITION WE TRIUMPH



CLASS COLORS:  
DARK RED, CHAMPAGNE, PEARL WHITE

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