

KILGORE COLLEGE
Rangerettes



**"It takes a big smile to really
bring out applause."**

Cussie Nell Davis

Rangerette Founder and Director, 1940 - 1979

KILGORE COLLEGE Rangerettes



Two rows flank the band as the drum line lifts their hands in anticipation. "One, two, roll off go."

The Kilgore College Fight Song radiates through the metal of the bleachers, bounces off the glow of the stadium lights, and guides the steps of the Rangerettes as they file down the field. Two by two, they twist and fall away from one another into a familiar red, white, and blue kick line that's so steeped in tradition that it spans not only the field, but every decade since the Rangerettes' first performance. The officers strut to their yard lines with batons held proudly. Heads down, smiles on, hearts pounding. The audience is enthralled, and the routine has yet to commence. The beauty of this introduction is the simplicity of its tradition. What began in 1940 still begins every Rangerette halftime performance.

Glory, glory hallelujah, the Rangerettes are here to stay.

On September 14, 1940, the Rangerettes first walked onto the Kilgore College football field in the darkness of a pitch black stadium. As 48 girls in red shirts, white belts, and daring 2-inch-above-the-knee blue skirts danced in a line behind 5 officers, distinctive in all white, fire crackers soared behind them. The audience was speechless. Halftime was a time for socializing under the bleachers, not sitting in them. The spectators sure weren't used to seeing something as beautiful on the field as the Rangerettes. No other group



The First Uniform

With the exception of a shortened hemline, the uniform hasn't changed since it was first designed by Kilgore College art student, Earl Ford Jr., in 1939.



had done anything like this before. The girls weren't twirling batons en masse or playing instruments while walking in formation. They were dancing and performing drills as a group, on the field, in front of a stadium full of jaw-dropped faces. The president of the college, Dr. B. E. Masters, had hired Miss Gussie Nell Davis, the director of the Greenville

High School Flaming Flashes, to come to Kilgore College and do two things: increase the female-to-male ratio at the school and use that heightened ratio to keep the seats warm during halftime. She did both. **On September 14, 1940, the Rangerettes brought showbiz to the football field.**



From major cities across the globe, to the small towns of East Texas, for 69 years and counting, the Rangerette high kick has never failed to impress and inspire all those whose privilege it is to watch. The "Where We've Been" map is filling up quickly, as the Rangerettes continue to travel from coast to coast and around the world. Over the years, they have embarked on a number of international tours, including performances in Canada, Venezuela, Hong Kong, Macao,



Though known world-wide for their high kicks and jump splits, it's the graceful presence of the Kilgore College Rangerettes that keeps them in demand for special events, from football games to presidential inaugurations. Bundled in their "little red coats," the Rangerettes have been invited to perform at Dwight D. Eisenhower's and both of George W. Bush's Presidential Inaugurations in Washington D.C. While in the nation's capital, the Rangerettes performed at the Texas State Society's Black Tie and Boots Inaugural Ball and the Governor's Ball for Rick Perry, two of the



The Rangerettes have graced the covers of many books and magazines.



Spreading Joy Around the World

The Kilgore College Rangerettes are a distinctive American phenomenon, known around the world as ambassadors of the great state of Texas and the USA.



"I see that the Kilgore Rangerettes are here! I appreciate you all coming."

President George W. Bush

Korea, Romania, France, Japan, Singapore, and Ireland. As their international fame continues to grow, there will continue to be opportunities for future Rangerettes to travel abroad. But no matter how far they travel, the Rangerettes always love coming home to the USA! They have performed

across the country at many spectacular events, including the Field's Jingle Elf Thanksgiving Day parade in Chicago, Illinois; the East West Shrine Bowl Game in Palo Alto, California; the 500 Festival Parade in Indianapolis, Indiana and the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York City.

biggest inaugural celebrations in town. The Rangerettes are also in high demand in the Lone Star State for the Texas Governor's Inaugural Events and for every Cotton Bowl Classic pre-game and halftime show since 1951. Anytime you want to give an audience a big Texas welcome, the Rangerettes are a must! Over the decades, the Rangerettes

have been privileged to meet many other government officials and celebrities. Just to name a few, they include Miss Texas, Governor Ann Richards, Bob Hope, John Wayne, Neal McCoy, Troy Aikman, Prince Charles and Presidents Lyndon B. Johnson, Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan, George H. W. Bush and George W. Bush.



Often called the world's most sought after collegiate performers, the Rangerettes have appeared in many stage and industrial shows such as the Jerry Lewis Telethon, the Miss Texas Scholarship Pageant, the Meeting Planners International Annual Conference, the Dallas Crystal Charity Ball and many other corporate events and conventions. Each spring, the Rangerettes present their own variety show called Rangerette Revels. This show features the world famous beauties in all genres of dance including tap, jazz, modern, and musical theatre. The grand finale presents the Rangerettes in a show stopping high kick



The Gussie Nell Davis Rangerette Residence was built largely in part from a generous donation by the Zwick Foundation. Kathryn Heller Zwick is a Longview, Texas native who was a Rangerette from 1976 to 1978. She and her husband, Nick, live in California and stay very active in the life of the Rangerette organization. For over 40 years, the Rangerettes lived in the original Gussie Nell Davis Dorm. Keeping her name and spirit alive in the Rangerettes' new home was important to the Zwicks, Kilgore College, and the

changed so dramatically and at such a fast pace as it has in the past century. Although the famous "hat dance" of the 1940's Rangerette line holds a respectable place in our history, to say we've grown is an understatement. The grace of a Rangerette's demeanor, the classic beauty of her uniform, and the awe of seeing her move in perfection with 47 other women will ensure her timelessness in the world that we haven't yet met. The World Famous Kilgore College Rangerettes are a tribute to tradition that is



Rangerette Museum

The Rangerette museum tells their story in film, photos, magazine articles, and displays of their uniforms. The museum also features a tribute to Gussie Nell Davis.



Gussie Nell Davis Rangerette Residence

After a year of construction, in August of 2006, the 65th and 66th line of Rangerettes were the first to move in and begin making life-long memories within the freshly painted walls of the beautiful new residence hall.

production known as the Rangerette Extravaganza!

Located on the Kilgore College campus, the Rangerette Museum recently received a well-deserved makeover. The nostalgic showcase features a section including a "scrapbook page" for every line of the Rangerettes. The Rangerette store offers a wide variety of clothes and keepsakes. The second floor is dedicated to Miss Davis

and displays a variety of her stylish clothing, as well as classic pictures of her with her beloved "girls." There is also a state of the art theater within the museum where videos of Rangerette history are shown continuously. Rare footage of Miss Davis, early performances, and interviews with the only other two directors, Mrs. Deana Bolton Covin and Mrs. Dana Blair, are highlights not to be missed.

Rangerette organization. Throughout the new Gussie Nell Davis Rangerette Residence, there are many remembrances of Miss Davis as well as memorabilia of current and former Rangerette lines.

As we look to the future of the Rangerette organization, we keep at the forefront of our minds that the world has never

underscored by talent. As the Rangerette saying goes, "From the outside looking in, you can't understand it; and from the inside out, you can't explain it." Watch the attached DVD and visit our website, www.rangerette.com. We think you'll agree: **We were the first and are still the best!**

