

## Is There Really a Seahawk? Only in Wilmington and Seattle

What does Errol Flynn have to do with the University of North Carolina at Wilmington? If the truth be known, the actor played a not insignificant part in the school's colors and mascot.

How? It's a long, but interesting, story.

Adrian D. Hurst, UNCW professor emeritus, researched the origins of the mascot and colors. This is the story.

Just after the first basketball team had been organized in 1947, with Stanley Katkaveck as coach, someone suggested that they needed a mascot. Several suggestions were made. One of the suggestions was the seahawk, made by Carl E. Mason and LeRoy Towles, both on the basketball team. Mason and Towles also suggested green and gold as the school colors. After all suggestions had been made, Wilmington College students voted. The rest is history. We are the Seahawks, and our colors are green and gold.

But where did Mason and Towles come up with the seahawk and the colors? After all, there isn't even such a bird!

According to Mason in a recent interview, he and his teammate had seen the movie "The Seahawk" starring Errol Flynn, in which Flynn played a ship's captain who was nicknamed the Seahawk. They were, of course, impressed with Errol Flynn. But, the similarity of our ocean, sand and birds to some of the scenes in the movie impressed them too, and they thought it would be appropriate for the seahawk to be Wilmington College's mascot, and green and gold the colors.

According to Mason, the prize for the suggestion which became the mascot was two free season tickets to all basketball games for two years. The only problem with that was—both Mason and Towles *played* basketball! They didn't need the tickets. Mason said he never did find out who, if anyone, received the free tickets.

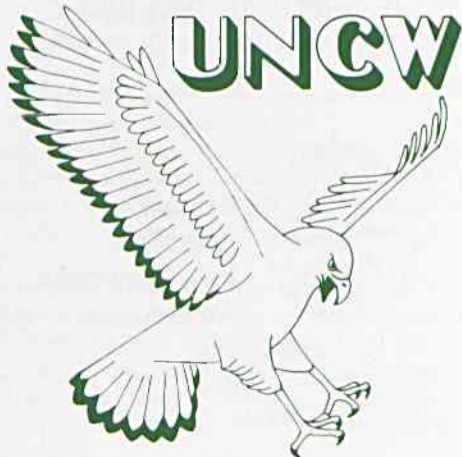
Interestingly enough, the Seattle Seahawks of the National Football League came into being in much the same way as our local Seahawks. The owners held a contest, offering a prize to the name they liked the best. Seattle residents weren't able to vote, of course, but everybody who wanted to could enter the contest.

In his research, Hurst discovered one other person who was largely responsible for the favorable student vote on the seahawk and green and gold. Maurice "Houck" Moore was a likable student, got involved in campus campaigns, and was active in carrying the banner for the adoption of the seahawk and the colors.

Over the years, the Wilmington College/UNCW Seahawk has been portrayed in several different poses. Many of them are shown here. The bird has been flying up and flying down; it has been strutting proudly; it has even looked somewhat like a parrot! But no matter what the look or style, that bird has always been our Seahawk.

Many people believe that there is such a bird as a seahawk. But, according to ornithology books, there isn't. There is, however, a beautiful local bird, found in a large part of the coastal area of

### Today's Seahawk



Fort Bragg photo

**UNCW DELEGATION VISITS ROTC ADVANCED CAMP AT FORT BRAGG**—From left, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs William A. Bryan is greeted by Col. Michael McAdams, ROTC Area 5 commander. Looking on are Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Charles L. Canine, Maj. David Felt, chairman of the military science depart-

ment at UNCW; 2nd Lt. Greg Rice, Advanced Camp protocol officer; Dr. Norman R. Kaylor, dean of the Cameron School of Business Administration; and Dr. Daniel B. Plyler, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

## He Views Blindness as an Asset

Severe cataracts and glaucoma stole Leroy Harkley's sight at the age of 7. Now, 20 years later, the University of North Carolina at Wilmington senior is doing everything he can to help other blind people, especially the elderly.

An intern with the Wilmington Parks and Recreation Department, he shows blind adults how to bowl, swim, play table games, do crafts and dance.

"They seem to have a good attitude," he said. "They don't seem down on themselves or complain. They all seem happy and cheerful."

That is precisely how others would describe

the eastern United States, that is commonly called a Fishhawk by commercial fishermen, because it is a predator and feeds on fish. Most bird books refer to this bird as an Osprey.

Adrian Hurst said recently that "I probably wouldn't have remembered anything about these events, except for the fact that, sometime before the mascot elections, someone approached me to know what I thought about the suggestion of the Seahawk. When I told them there is no such bird, I was soon told, jokingly, that there was going to be one!"

These same Seahawks are set to join the ECAC-South in the fall. The basketball schedule is being finalized now. Other schedules are also in the works. For the first time, UNCW will participate in a post-season conference tournament for a chance to play in the NCAA national tournament.

*(Adrian Hurst is emeritus professor of mathematics at UNCW. He began teaching when Wilmington College opened its doors in 1947. He was very popular among the students, and he remains active in the university's activities. He established the Adrian D. Hurst Award to recognize a UNCW junior or senior math major who has achieved the highest academic grade point average. He presents the award each spring. We at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington thank him for all his efforts, both inside and out of the classroom.)*

Harkley, a soft-spoken, likable man who views his handicap as an advantage, not a hindrance.

Because he is blind, he relates better to other people in the same situation, he said. "I always felt that I could help others," he said recently in his dormitory room at UNCW, a room filled with N.C. State University basketball posters.

"Especially the elderly. I read so much about how society treated them, how they were pushed aside. I could relate to that."

Born in Havelock to a family of 11, Harkley began losing his eyesight right after he began school. He recalls catching a school bus and attending class. He remembers colors.

Then the diseases took over. For a while he could detect light and dark. Now he cannot see a thing.

For 13 years, he attended the Governor Morehead School for the blind in Raleigh. He learned to read and write Braille, a system using raised dots for letters and numbers.

Now as a college student, he tapes the lectures in class. Then he goes back to his dorm and plays the tape back, taking notes in Braille.

Harkley is receiving class credit for his work with the city parks department, where he spends 18 hours a week. Among other projects, he developed the "Remember Radio" program for the visually impaired.

He is studying social work at UNCW. When he finishes his courses in May, he plans to look for a job with an agency that works with the elderly and blind.

People ask him, he said, how he managed. It takes confidence, he answers, and a determination not to depend on anyone but himself.

"When it first happened, when it hit me, I was angry," he said. "Of all the people in the world, why did it happen to me?"

"I was not only angry at myself, I was angry at everyone else. Then I got used to it. I've been blind so many years. People ask me whether, if I could choose, would I be sighted or blind? I don't know. Maybe I would choose to be blind."

*This story first appeared in the March 3, 1984 edition of the Wilmington Morning Star. It was written by Laura A. Mercer. Harkley has since graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree.*