

Alumni News



Janie Shearin (seated) observed her 100th birthday on December 31 and celebrated the occasion with her younger sister, Minnie James Futrell Vinson, left, who was 90 years old on January 3. The birthday party was well attended by family, friends, and several of her former students.

Graduate with teaching degree, Class of '14, reaches century mark

By KEITH HOGGARD
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Family and friends of Janie Futrell Shearin gathered at Roanoke Valley Nursing Home in Rich square on December 31 to help celebrate her 100th birthday.

Also attending and honored for her 90th birthday on January 3, was Mrs. Shearin's younger sister, Minnie James Futrell Vinson.

Both Shearin and Vinson are originally from the Ashley's Grove community near Conway.

Shearin was born December 31, 1893 to the late James Ira and Annie Pope Futrell. She was the oldest of four sisters. Shearin's and Vinson's two other sisters were the late Claive Revelle and the late Beatrice Bridgers.

Shearin, a retired teacher, taught for 43 years until her retirement in 1957. She taught in Galatia, Macon in Warren County, William R. Davie School in Roanoke Rapids, and also in Vance County and Murfreesboro.

She received her education at Holly Grove School and was awarded her teaching degree by Chowan College in the Class of 1914. Several of her former students attended her 100th birthday party and many more sent birthday cards.

Shearin moved from the Ashley's Grove

community to Macon after marrying the late V. G. Shearin. Following his death in 1950 she moved to Conway where she became a well respected member of the community and an active member of Conway Baptist Church.

Shearin now resides in the Roanoke Valley Nursing Home.

Shearin said she enjoyed her career as a teacher and said it was "very rewarding," but she added, "I am glad I did it when I did it."

As to her secret of longevity, Shearin said, "I must have done something right. I got my help from the Lord. I depended on Him."

She added, "I have always tried to do things for my health and the things I should have done. And I've had some mighty good help."

Asked how it feels to be 100 years old, Shearin replied, "I don't feel too well, but I don't expect to at my age. It gets harder every day to get around, but I keep trying."

Ashed what young people ought to do, Shearin thought for a moment and replied, "The first thing is they should put their trust in the Lord and be obedient. That is an important thing."

She added, "They should also make preparations for living. Get an education and get going in the right direction."

"Get a good education and get going in the right direction."

Death claims Elton Parker, recipient of 1990 Distinguished Alumni Award



Elton C. Parker
1921 - 1994

Elton C. Parker, 73, died at his home in Raleigh on January 18, 1994. A native of Murfreesboro, he had lived in Raleigh for 42 years and was a member of Hayes Barton Baptist Church.

A graduate of Chowan in the Class of 1939, Parker received the Distinguished Alumni Award in 1990 in recognition of his many contributions to his church, community and alma mater. He was also honored for outstanding community service by the City of Raleigh.

A former school teacher and Employment Security Commission manager, he began his career with an insurance company in 1952 and retired in 1983 as Personnel and Public Relations Manager of Nationwide Insurance Company.

A graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Parker founded the Tarheel Chapter of Toastmasters International, and was instrumental in forming the Les Parlates Chapter of Toastmistresses International and the Nationwide Secretarial Club.

He was proclaimed an official Muleskinner of Benson and upon his retirement he was named by Governor James B. Hunt, Jr., to the Order of the Long Leaf Pine.

Survivors include his wife, Mary Louise Schmidt Parker; three foster children; a twin brother, Dr. Alton W. Parker of Murfreesboro; six grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

The funeral was held at Hayes Barton Baptist Church, with burial in Murfreesboro.

Nursing pin replaced after twenty years

Last summer when Mary Jo Ellis was participating in Chowan's annual "Office Clean-Up Day", little did she know that she would help bring a lot of happiness to a graduate in the Class of 1972.

Ellis, secretary to the Vice-President for Academic Affairs, was cleaning a closet in her office when she noticed a small, dusty envelope in the back corner.

Upon examination, she found two gold nurse's cap pins which were presented to graduates of Chowan's two-year nursing program until the curriculum was discontinued in a number of years ago.

Ellis put the envelope in a drawer of her desk but gave no further thought to the pins which are treasured by those who received them.

Just after Christmas, 1993, Rebecca Wall Herbstreith of Durham, telephoned the college with a somewhat unusual request. Her call was transferred to Ellis' office.

Ms. Herbstreith, a nursing major who met her husband while they were both students at Chowan, graduated in the Class of 1972. She has continued a nursing career and is now in the neurology department of Duke Medical Center.

Ms. Herbstreith said she had lost her Chowan nursing pin some years ago and had tried "everything I know to get another one."

"Is there any way you can help me . . . or do you know of the company who made the pins so that I might contact them?" she asked.

"Sure," replied Mrs. Ellis, "I can help. As a matter of fact, I have one of the pins here in my desk!"

Of course, Ms. Herbstreith was delighted to get another pin after so many years and Mrs. Ellis was pleased that she was able to help bring a small amount of happiness to a Chowan graduate.

The other nursing pin which Ellis found will be placed in the Antiquities Room of Whitaker Library with other college memorabilia for it is, indeed, a part of Chowan's history.

Alumni notes . .

Joey and Stephanie Kissinger Mabe, Class of 1986, have announced the birth of their second baby girl in October, 1993.

Christina Lynne Naprstek, Class of 1989, of Portsmouth, VA, and Eric Joseph Richardson were married November 27, 1993. After a wedding trip to New England, the couple is residing in Suffolk.

Tommy St. Clair, Class of 1964, was recently promoted to the position of key account representative for M&M/Mars Company, a firm he has represented for 18 years. St. Clair also recently moved into a new home on Lake Hickory.

Joy Elizabeth Maxwell, Class of 1993, are James R. Dailey, will be married on October 15, at Temple Baptist Church in Newport News, VA.

James Daniel Hobbs, Class of 1991, and Deborah Lynn Bunch, both of Suffolk, VA, will be married April 9 at Southside Baptist Church. Hobbs is employed by Nestle Beverage Company, and she is associated with QVC Network, Inc.