

Alumna reminisces about modeling, TV, film work



Meredith Kennedy Buser made a special trip to the campus in September to renew her friendship with Registrar Darrell H. Nicholson.

By RANDY BRANTLEY
Director of College Relations

Pop artist Andy Warhol once said that everyone will experience at least fifteen minutes of fame. Chowan alumna Meredith Kennedy Buser ('72) has exceeded Warhol's fifteen minutes, if years of working in feature films, television, and modeling constitute fame.

On Sept. 11, Buser returned to the Murfreesboro campus to visit longtime friend and Registrar Darrell Nicholson. She reminisced about her career in entertainment with Nicholson and Randy Brantley.

During her years in entertainment, Buser worked with a number of familiar celebrities. Buser's credits include a supporting role opposite Jane Alexander in the CBS television program "Malice in Wonderland." She played the part of Carlotta in the CBS movie *Private Eye*, starring Jimmy Smits. Buser worked with Robert Wagner in the television movie *The Calender Girl Murders*. In the Walt Disney television movie *Waputula*, the actress played Francin La Du, the proprietor of a kissing booth at a county fair.

In addition to roles in feature films and television, Buser worked in commercials and industrial films. She was seen in commercials produced for companies such as Clairol, General Electric, Max Factor, and Wendy's Restaurants. Buser was cast in a number of industrial films, which are used for promotional or instructional purposes by a company. Names such as Westinghouse, Chevrolet, General Electric, and Phillip Morris are included on her list of industrial film credits.

Buser's entertainment experience extended beyond the United States. She worked for the second largest advertising company in Japan. In Taiwan, Buser worked in commercials, variety shows, and print advertisements.

The actress' training began at Chowan College in 1970. Buser played the role of Bianca in the drama department's production of Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew*. While

completing the associate's degree in fine arts in 1972, Buser learned that a fellow student was planning to audition for the American Academy of Dramatic Arts. The friend encouraged Buser to audition as well. Buser was accepted to the academy and studied there for one year.

Buser described the academy program as challenging and rigid. She explained that the instructors would "tear apart the students limb by limb." A group of seventeen students together studied voice, music, make up, movement, and dance.

After the academy, Buser studied with the renowned Herbert Berghof Organization. She believes that an actress can "never have enough classes and training." According to Buser, "Even the most simple movements are important in acting." She cited James Dean as an actor who mastered body language.

Buser acquired additional training at the University of Maryland, Weist-Barron, Harry Fields Studio of Music, and Van Mar Academy of Motion Pictures and Television.

"An aspiring actress," Buser explained, "must secure a good agent first; a manager comes later." Buser worked with a number of agents. While in New York City, Buser's manager was the mother of actresses Audrey and Judy Landers. Buser remains a member of both the Screen Actors Guild and the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists.

Eventually, Buser moved to Hollywood to pursue work. A number of her friends had secured parts in Hollywood productions. Buser did what most "starving artists" do: she worked as a waitress—in a posh Beverly Hills restaurant. She worked split shifts in order to model and work in trade shows. Buser explained that an actress must devote time to building a reputable portfolio. Aside from this, the actress explained, "Nepotism is a very real part of the Hollywood social scene."

In Los Angeles, Buser met her husband, Swiss physicist Rolf Fritz Buser. He was completing post-doctoral work at California Technical Institute. The couple now resides in Diegten, Switzerland. Rolf Buser develops computer software for a number of European banks. Meredith, who speaks Swiss German, now teaches English in the Berlitz program. She described Switzerland as "a highly organized country."

Buser stated that she truly enjoyed her Chowan years. She described herself as an insecure, quiet child. After beginning college, Buser became "a little rebellious." She stated that Chowan was like a second parent. Buser recalled having to sign in and out of the dormitory. Nonetheless, she enjoyed dorm life and living with the other girls.

After a visit with Nicholson, Buser was off to New York City and then traveling home to Switzerland. Although she has traveled thousands of miles since 1972, Meredith Kennedy Buser maintains her ties with Chowan—the college that launched an exciting career in the entertainment industry.

Alumna now lives in Switzerland after working in feature films, television

Exciting career in entertainment industry launched at Chowan

Work of master printmaker exhibited in Green Hall Art Gallery

The Chowan College Visual Arts Division faculty hosted a reception for N. Gary Jenks, master printmaker and professor at Norfolk State University, in October to open an exhibit of Jenks' work in the Green Hall Art Gallery.

Jenks is a highly respected intaglio printmaker. Christina Rupsch, acting head of the Division of Visual Arts, explained, "Intaglio printmakers create an image below the surface of a metal plate and then run the plate through an etching press. Jenks' works are quite fascinating."

A graduate of Ohio State University, Jenks has been teaching at Norfolk State University for the past 15 years. He serves as director of the university's James Wise Gallery. The artist has exhibited at the Peninsula Fine Arts Annual Exhibition in Newport News, VA; the River Gallery in Portsmouth, VA; and the Irene Leache Biennial at the Chrysler Museum. Jenks holds membership in a number of art and wildlife associations.

Exhibit of calligraphy by Gwen Weaver and Betsy Rivers displayed

"Scriptorium," an exhibit of calligraphy by artists Gwen Weaver and Betsy Rivers, opened in the Green Hall Art Gallery in late November. Weaver and Rivers were in attendance at the opening reception to greet patrons to the exhibit which was sponsored by Chowan's Division of Art. Video interviews in which the artists explained their work and techniques were shown during the opening reception.

Weaver and Rivers consider themselves to be calligraphers, illustrators, and graphic designers. A large part of their work consists of commissions, illustrating and putting into words poetry, songs, and resolutions. The two women share an art studio at D'Art Center in downtown Norfolk, VA.

Weaver has been a calligrapher for 37 years and prefers the copper plate script style. She uses the pointed pen technique. A calligrapher for 40 years, Rivers prefers the italic style and uses the chisel edged pen.

OOPS! Alumna's name omitted from listing

In the fall edition of *Chowan Today*, published in September, the name of Miss Wylma C. Woolard ('37) of Charlotte was omitted from the listing of alumni donors of the Class of 1937.

The editor of *Chowan Today* regrets the omission caused by a typographical error.