



Left to right: Lamar J. Brooks and President Lott.

Delivers Founders Day Convocation address

# Dr. Brooks envisions dichotomy in future of Chowan College

Dr. Lamar J. Brooks, of Wilmington, North Carolina, addressed guests at the annual Founders Day Convocation October 10, 1996. A pastor for nearly 50 years, Brooks has served North Carolina Baptists in a number of leadership positions including the presidency of the general board of the Baptist State Convention.

Brooks was instrumental in leading the way for North Carolina Baptist colleges to exercise greater latitude in the election of trustees. Particularly important to Chowan, situated so near the Virginia state line, was the provision that allows up to one-fourth of the trustees to live outside the state of North Carolina.

A member of the Committee on Nominations for the Baptist State Convention, Brooks is assigned specifically as the liaison between the committee and Chowan College and has worked closely with the college in the enlistment of new trustees.

Speaking on the founding of the college, Brooks referred to the opening of Chowan as a Baptist miracle. "When this school was founded, one hundred forty-eight years ago, few Baptists anywhere in the world were serious about the education of women . . . today we honor these founders and others—

both men and women—who helped them with their noble task."

Brooks was articulate in reviewing the history of the college and moved his talk toward the future. "Today as we raise our Ebenezer, our Stone of Help, on this anniversary occasion, we dare not let it become only a monument to the past. It needs instead to be a milestone pointing us toward the future."

Taking a trip down nostalgia lane, Brooks pointed at the many changes that have taken place in the world throughout his lifetime and pointed out that, "this is only the beginning, because the rate of change is plunging forward." He warned that not all change is for the better. "Some are saying the solution is to go back—back to the 'good old days' of the nineteenth century. We see that especially in ultraconservative religion and in right-wing politics . . . be fully warned that whenever such a coalition captures an educational institution, it turns that college or university or seminary into an indoctrination station in which academic freedom is dead and the open pursuit of truth is forbidden.

"Others are repudiating modernity by moving away in the opposite direction—into what is often called the 'Postmodern Era.' This is a fantastic never-never land in which reality has little significance, and only perception seems to count. Character is overlooked, while a positive public image is treasured. Beliefs are brushed aside, and make-believe is treated like royalty. Education in the true meaning of the term, disappears, and schools are transformed into a fool's paradise where there are no fixed points of reference and every academic discipline finds itself drowning in a quagmire of subjectivism, relativism and existentialism."

Brooks continued, "What does this dichotomy mean for Christian Higher Education, and for Chowan College in particular?"

"First, it means that you who are now a part of Chowan College . . . are among the chosen few in our society who have the very best opportunity to understand these complex issues and to exercise leadership in solving the problems. You are in a small, private, church-related college, with a good student-faculty ratio in which real teaching and learning can actually take place, with true freedom to study political, economic and religious realms—and there is no better seed bed on earth for creative solutions in the twenty-first century. Make the most of it.

"Second, it means that historic forms of financial support may dwindle—not only the drying up of government money for scholarships and loans, but new uncertainties in the realm of denominational funding . . . the continuing development of major financial support from individuals and foundations would become more urgent than ever.

"Third, whatever political or religious or philosophical or sociological movements may ebb and flow in the next century, God will be as real as ever to men and women of faith. When the Postmodern Era becomes a thing of the past and something else becomes the fashion of the day, God will still be God.

"Whatever changes may be thrust upon us in the next century, Chowan College is on the right track to build its future upon the Eternal God, upon freedom in the pursuit of truth, and upon those genuine, abiding moral values of faith and hope and love."

## Chowan memorabilia sought for inauguration exhibit

The Inauguration Committee is assembling a collection of Chowan College memorabilia for an exhibit to be displayed during the week of inaugural activities beginning April 13, 1997. As holiday decorations are carried to the attic, please take a few moments to go through old boxes, dig out dusty scrapbooks and offer to share your personal archives with others.

Items of interest include old photos, paintings, drawings, athletic uniforms, Braves paraphernalia or other Chowan artifacts. Original building furnishings or course catalogs prior to 1943 would be of particular interest.

Please contact Carol Sexton, assistant librarian, at (919) 398-6241 for details.



Cookie Beyah '99 of Charlotte, NC, registers to vote during the MTV "Rock the Vote" campaign in Thomas Cafeteria as Todd Ruetsch '99 of Syracuse, NY and Christina Clark '97 of Manassas, VA look on.

Over forty members of the campus community enjoyed a day at Virginia's Busch Gardens during October. Pictured are (front from left) Terenia Autry, Neely McCully, Michael Dadez, Ed Dadez, vice president of student life, Courtney Beale, & Christy Underwood (back from left) Dave Whitby, Denise Deam & Rob Dadez.

