

26 Years Of Dedication

"I just don't know what to say; this is the greatest thing that has ever happened to me," began J.P. Smith as he stepped to the microphone at the 1979 Alumni Banquet at which he was a guest of honor. Mr. Smith had just received a plaque of appreciation from Joe Graham (71), who also announced the formation of the J.P. Smith Scholarship Fund.

The announcement came as a result of a recent meeting of twenty accounting alumni, who gathered to determine how they could best pay tribute to J.P. Smith. Mr. Smith will retire at the end of May after some twenty-six years of service to the college.

Alumni at the meeting, knowing Mr. Smith's belief that funds should never be an obstacle for anyone who wanted an education, could think of no better way to honor him than a scholarship in his name. Thus, a campaign for the J.P. Smith Scholarship Fund was begun with a goal of \$15,000 by May 31, 1979.

Because of the generosity of many alumni, over \$10,000 have already been raised. The alumni are well on their way to a goal which will yield an annual return to provide a scholarship for a worthy accounting student. And through this scholarship, the name of J.P. Smith will be able to continue at the col-



J. P. Smith

lege.

His association with the Abbey began in 1932 when he entered Belmont Abbey Junior College. Because of the difficulty of the depression, he was forced to drop out for a year in order to save tuition money. After finishing his two-year program at the Abbey, he transferred to Davidson College to complete his undergraduate work, and in 1940 he was awarded the B.S. degree in geography.

While the ink was still wet on his diploma, the military draft plucked him in the very first call from Mecklenburg County. When he left the army at the war's end in 1945 with the rank of major, two significant things had happened; he had taken Miss Amy Holland of Mount Holly as his bride, and he had

developed an interest in accounting through correspondence courses.

Upon resumption of civilian life, he decided to continue graduate study in the field of accounting. He enrolled at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, and his competence in the field won him an instructional job during his two years at the university.

In the summer of 1948, Mr. Smith returned to his Piedmont home to accept a position with Eck and Eck Certified Public Accountants, where he practiced public accounting and managed their Charlotte office. He also returned to the Abbey for the first time as a part-time instructor in the department of accounting, a position he held for two years before leaving

education temporarily.

In 1953 the Carey Boshamer Enterprises of Clover, S.C., offered him the position of comptroller, which he accepted.

Mr. Smith had been away from the Abbey for five years when in 1955 Father Cuthbert Allen, O.S.B., then president of the College, persuaded him to again teach part-time at his alma mater. Finally, in 1959, the Abbey won; Mr. Smith accepted a full-time appointment as assistant professor and also comptroller.

Belmont Abbey has not been disappointed. In the past twenty years Mr. Smith has proved to be one of the "blue chip" acquisitions of the college.

As chairman of the accounting department until 1975, he developed this major into one of the best and most productive in the college. In fact, Belmont Abbey College graduates rank third among all private universities and colleges in North Carolina in the percentage of graduates who pass the C.P.A. exam.

According to Mr. Smith, the greatest honor he had ever received prior to the J.P. Smith Scholarship was also from some of his accounting students. In appreciation of his leadership and inspiration, they presented him a special trophy as the "World's

Greatest Square Peg Salesman."

His devotion to his students has always kept him in the classroom. Even as treasurer and business manager of both the college and the monastery, he continued to teach. How did he find the time? Nobody knows!

He never refused a difficult job, and like a real pro, he always made it seem so easy. When one of his fellow administrators was in need of a desk, chair, table or typewriter, all they had to do was ask Mr. Smith. Several days later, the item would appear with no strings attached and origin unknown!

Belmont Abbey College will surely miss this fine faculty member and outstanding treasurer and business manager. It is indeed fortunate that the J.P. Smith Scholarship Fund will remain as a tribute to his twenty-six years of service to the college and its students.

Anyone interested in supporting the J.P. Smith Scholarship Fund may send their contributions to: The J.P. Smith Scholarship Fund, Development Office, Belmont Abbey College, Belmont, N.C. 28012. A complete list of those who have contributed will appear in the June issue of CROSSROADS.

Father Martin Hayes, O.S.B.

Faculty Focus

Father Martin Hayes, O.S.B. fondly remembered by many alumni for his good humor and coaching abilities, arrived at the Abbey in 1930 as a student. That same year he was a member of the first Crusader basketball team to play in the newly built Haid Gymnasium.

Upon finishing the two-year curriculum in 1932, he entered the Novitiate at St. Vincent's in Pennsylvania, before returning to Belmont Abbey for seminary in 1933. During those years Brother Martin served as a college prefect, which meant he enforced study hours, monitored meals and lived in the students' dorm, which he found enjoyable.

Ordained as a priest in 1939, he then went to Villa Nova University to study education.

When the decision was made to include a two-year business skills program as part of Belmont Abbey College's curriculum, Fr. Martin attended Pierce School of Business to prepare to coordinate the new division. Among the courses offered in this program were typing, shorthand, advertising and

by Sandy Scales



"Pop Martin"

salesmanship. After the Abbey became a four-year college, this specialized business curriculum was dropped in favor of the program we currently have, and Fr. Martin moved into his professorship in accounting, a position he still holds. Fr. Martin's great sense of humor and spirited banter make his class a favored choice of freshmen and business majors.

An athletic man by nature, Fr. Martin coached the Abbey tennis team until 1968 and since then has been the golf coach. Other positions he has held at Belmont Abbey

include treasurer and procurator on two different occasions. He is currently the prior of the monastery.

Outside of the Belmont campus, he has taught at Benedictine in Savannah, Ga., was the education officer for the United States Auxiliary Coast Guard for the interior waters on Flotilla 95.

In addition to his intellectual and athletic interests, Fr. Martin is a founding member of the Gaston County Pigeon Racing Club. His birds have won numerous trophies in the twenty years he has raced them. At the moment he has no birds but hopes to soon acquire another pair.

Fr. Martin has seen the Abbey evolve from a self-sufficient, farm-oriented environment to one which is bounded by interstate highways and major cities. He indicates that the physical separation of the dorm life from the monastic life is unfortunate because of the loss of close spiritual interaction between students and monks. Otherwise he sees the changes as positive.

140 Glendale Ave.
Mt. Holly, N.C. 28120
April 7, 1979

Dear Alumni and Friends of Belmont Abbey College,

Saturday evening, March 31, 1979 will always remain in my memory as one of the most outstanding events of my life. The handsome plaque presented to me on your behalf by Joe Graham hangs on the wall in our home, an attractive witness to your thoughtfulness and generosity. In my heart and soul will always live the wonderful knowledge and assurance that, because of you, in my honor, some young person will be annually receiving help needed to secure an education. This, as most of you know, has been the chief aim of my work for a great part of my life. There is no way I can adequately thank you. I just hope you can read between the lines all the gratitude in my heart.

It was a great joy to see and visit with many of my former students at the Alumni Banquet. I regret that there were some I missed seeing. I want to thank all of you who returned to the campus to honor me, and to tell you that through the years I continue to be proud of you and the contribution you are each making to the particular businesses and communities where you are situated.

As I retire from active duty at Belmont Abbey, I look back upon my association with all of you with a great deal of satisfaction. I don't have the feeling that I'm actually leaving the Abbey, as my residence is in close proximity to the campus, and I plan to drop in for visits from time to time. Certainly, I plan to make whatever contribution I can as an alumnus to the ongoing of this educational institution so beloved by all of us.

Amy joins me in this message, and in sending all good wishes to you and those dear to you.

Sincerely,

J.P. Smith