

Dormitory Named in Honor of Alumna



MRS. OLIVIA BENTHALL JENKINS



DR. R. P. THOMAS

Chowan College's Board of Trustees took action in session on campus recently toward having a campus structure named in honor of the college's oldest living alumna, Mrs. Olivia Benthall Jenkins, and in memory of her son, the late Charles H. Jenkins.

A member of the class of 1876 who celebrated her 103rd birthday on November 20, Mrs. Jenkins is a recipient of Chowan College's Distinguished Alumni Award and a long-time leader in church and civic life who resides in Aulander.

The dormitory on campus which will bear the Jenkins family name is a modern and functional unit providing attractive and desirable accommodations for young women students at Chowan. This residence hall is located on the east side of Chowan's main campus between Jones Street and Union Drive.

Mrs. Jenkins is the mother of Herbert Jenkins, Sr., Mrs. J. E. Saunders, Mrs. G. C. Mitchell, all of Aulander, and Mrs. D. E. Henderson of Charlotte. All of her children have assumed numerous positions of responsibility and leadership for Chowan College. She is also the mother of the late Wayland Jenkins, noted as an outstanding leader in the history of Chowan College.

The late Charles H. Jenkins remembered Chowan College substantially in his will. This active support of Chowan College is exemplary of the loyalty and support given Chowan by the Jenkins family for many years.

As State Senator he sponsored a bill supporting hospitals for North Carolina's rural areas and introduced a resolution pledging the State's cooperation with the Federal government on construction of Buggs Island, successfully engineering erection of a hydro-electric dam.

Naming of Chowan Cafeteria Honors Thomas Family of Cofield

Chowan College's new Dining Hall is being named the Thomas Cafeteria in memory of the late Dr. R. P. Thomas of Cofield and his wife, the late Mrs. Mary Green Mitchell Thomas, whose family represents more than a century of service to Chowan College.

Dr. Thomas, noted as an outstanding physician, farmer, citizen and devoted Christian, served for 27 years as Chairman of Chowan College's Board of Trustees and was a trustee for 33 years. His tenure of service in each of these offices is the longest in the college's history. Dr. Thomas served as Moderator of the West Chowan Baptist Association from 1883-1896.

His wife, an alumna of Chowan, contributed leadership and numerous sacrificial financial gifts to the college, supporting Chowan's endowment fund and also making many contributions to the college

library. Her record of service and leadership is unequalled in the history of Chowan's Alumni Association.

Senator Jenkins also served as Chairman of Bertie County's Highway Commission and as a member of the Department of Conservation and Development of N. C., having leadership positions on committees dealing with forests, parks and fisheries, and was Chairman of the North Carolina Committee on Interstate Cooperation.

A long-time Trustee of Chowan and Wake Forest colleges, he was a member of the Council of State Government and also served as Aulander Town Commissioner, Chairman of Bertie County's Liberty Loan Committee, and was a member of the Executive Committee of Bertie County.

He was a delegate to the Democratic National Convention and a Baptist deacon active in civic life throughout the Roanoke-Chowan area. After graduating from Wake Forest College and the University of North Carolina Law School, he served as school principal at Kinston and superintendent of Durham city schools.

A farmer and businessman, he founded the Charles H. Jenkins and Company of Aulander in 1910 and was president of Standard Chevrolet Company, Ahoskie; Charles H. Jenkins Motor Company, Edenton; Marsh Chevrolet Company, Aulander; and Charles H. Jenkins and Company businesses in Williamston, Ahoskie and Windor.

A native of Menola and life-long resident of Aulander, he died on November 1, 1958.

An alumnus of Wake Forest College who completed medical studies at the University of Virginia and advanced studies at the Medical University of New York, Dr. Thomas was the son of Judge Abraham Thomas. Judge Thomas, one of Chowan College's first trustees, was a leader in the founding of the college and a generous contributor.

W. A. Thomas and Miss Mary Thomas, a member of Chowan's class of 1902, have served as trustee. Miss Ruth Thomas, a member of the class of 1917, has been an active leader in the college's Alumni Association, as has her sister.

The Thomases reside in a picturesque plantation beside the Wiccacon River, near Cofield, in the home built by their father.