

Oscar Creech Named 'Honorary Life Trustee'

The Reverend Oscar Creech of Ahoskie, who served Chowan College as associate to the president, acting president and long-time director of development, gaining a wide reputation for successes as a fund-raiser and planner for meeting college needs, has been honored by its board of trustees and chosen to become the college's first "Honorary Life Trustee."

This title was unanimously bestowed by the college's board of trustees on Reverend Creech, whose first term as a Chowan trustee began almost 40 years ago.

Among many services to Chowan and North Carolina Baptists during his ministry have been contributions as author, historian, college official and pastor. He was pastor of Ahoskie's First Baptist church for 27 years and, during this pastorate, the man whose multitudes of accomplishments have made him into a figure of almost legendary proportions to people living between the Roanoke and Chowan rivers was instrumental in reopening Chowan College, closed by difficulties brought on by World War II. Later, serving as associate to the president, he was instrumental in starting Chowan's famed School of Graphic Arts.

Putting over 30,000 miles a year on his car, traveling for Chowan, he helped raise student enrollment from 87 to more than 1,300 and his efforts were extremely important in bringing a campus valued at about \$100,000.00 to its present evaluation of more than \$5 million. Originating the Office of Development at Chowan, he has done everything possible for Chowan College except classroom teaching. He considers his hardest task to have been fund-raising, but many who gave money for reopening Chowan College, saying "I'm gonna give you this check, but I don't think you can make a go of it," now laugh about their lack of faith.

He resisted many efforts to get him to become Chowan College's president, but when the late Dr. F.O. Mixon became Chowan's president in 1951 he told Creech, "It is as much the Lord's will for you to come with Chowan College as it was for me to come," and he became associate to the president.

As chairman of a planning committee for post-war development of Ahoskie during World War II, he laid plans for Roanoke-Chowan hospital and, within two weeks got more than \$100,000.00 in pledges for a medical facility now valued at over \$1.5 million. "We emphasized getting the best," he says, "the best doctors, nurses and medical attention for our people."

Much opposition met efforts to get tax support for the hospital, which started as a private enterprise, but as chairman of the election to get tax support he gained a landslide majority. His committee also gained recreational areas for children, and interest in children is natural for him, as he is father of six, came from a family of 10 children, and served as scoutmaster of Ahoskie for 11 years.

Before entering the ministry, Rev. Creech, a Wake Forest University graduate, was principal of three high schools and superintendent of Nash County Schools, besides being food administrator in Nash County during World War



HONORED BY CHOWAN — Reverend Oscar Creech is pictured with his wife at their home in Ahoskie. The amiable pastor has been named "Honorary Life Trustee" by Chowan College Board of Trustees.

I. After graduation from Southern Baptist seminary, he pastored Nashville Baptist church for four and a half years, then Red Oak church for another four and a half years before going to Ahoskie.

He served as chairman of fund-raising drives for Chowan, Meredith, Wake Forest, and all seven of North Carolina's Baptist colleges; on boards of trustees of Chowan and Meredith colleges and the North Carolina Baptist hospital; as president of the North Carolina Baptist Pastors' conference, being featured speaker on its program, as a vice-president of the North Carolina Baptist State convention, preaching the annual convention sermon, being

chairman of the committee on committees and a member of the General Board, as well as being director of THE BIBLICAL RECORDER. The West Chowan Association utilized his services as clerk and moderator. Awards for outstanding service were bestowed on him by the Ahoskie Rotary club and the Wake Forest alumni association.

Under his supervision, hundreds of trees and many shrubs have been planted on campus since 1951 at Chowan, where his chairmanship of a long-range planning committee contributed multitudes of recommendations to the trustees for Chowan's growth and development.

He and his wife, the former Martha Louise Guley of Clayton, have been married for more than 60 years.

Hobbies they enjoy together include hunting, fishing and raising roses. He planted grapevines for President Whitaker, enjoys trimming shrubbery and trees on Chowan's campus, and multitudes of trees he planted on campus include cypress, oaks and pines which tower over Chowan College like the spirit of Oscar Creech towers over life between the Roanoke and Chowan rivers.

A coronary attack slightly slowed his tremendous pace for several years, but he says, "It's been a good life, a busy life, and I thank God that I was healthy as a bear for 78 years."

His philosophy is summed up, "I never knew how to say 'No' when called on to do the Lord's work."

Contributions he has made as an author include *History of Ahoskie Baptist Church* and co-authorship of *A History of Chowan College*, published in 1964.

His many services to the college through the years have made Oscar Creech and Chowan College almost synonymous terms in the minds of multitudes of people, and he has become known throughout a wide area as "Mr. Chowan College."



FAVORITE PASTIME — Reverend Creech enjoys his favorite pastime — fishing on the Chowan River. Mr. Creech has afforded a host of his friends with many pleasant hours on the river, and is quick to testify that he "knows where the fish are."