

# Amazing Assistance

Thanks to the generous response of many different groups and individuals, freshman Mei Yan has averted a financial crisis that would have forced her early return to China as a college dropout.

Yan, 20, a music major, is the college's first student from mainland China. She had been recommended to Chowan by a woman of Chinese origin living in Elizabeth City, N.C. in 1984.

Dean of students, Clayton Lewis, sent Mei materials and explained the costs. She was accepted in February, 1985 and given the arrival date for the fall semester.



The young musician is the first student from Mainland China to attend Chowan.

## "Land of Opportunity

But Mei arrived on July 30, almost a month early, with her suitcase, violin and \$1,000 toward her college costs. She told Dean Lewis she had always heard of America as a land of opportunity and felt that through playing her violin and babysitting she could raise the difference to satisfy her college expenses.

Lewis realized there was little time to mount an effort to raise the additional amount to cover her tuition, room and board. The industrious Lewis, in his 18th year as Dean of Students, contacted a graduate in Norfolk, VA., Genny Wong Slaughter, a Chinese-American,

to ask for her help and advice. She suggested he contact Virginian-Pilot columnist, Larry Bonko. This began "an amazing chain of events," Lewis noted.

## Featured in Article

When Bonko heard the story, he quickly agreed to write an article, which appeared under the title, "Young Chinese Musician Hits Financially Sour Note." Lewis said the article produced a number of financial contributions including one from the author.

Lewis recommended her for the \$2,000 Herbert Hugh Lewis Scholarship named in memory of his father. Just before her arrival on campus the student to whom the scholarship had originally been awarded decided to attend a college closer to his home as a commuting student.

## Rotary Scholarship

Lewis, a Rotarian, appealed to the Student Exchange Committee of District 771 for a scholarship for Mei. District 771 responded by naming Mei a Rotary exchange student and providing her with a \$2,000 scholarship. Lewis said this was an unusual move as the students are normally selected while still in their home country.

Mei was befriended by Winslow Carter, the college's director of admissions, and his wife who invited her to stay with their family until the dormitories opened. Carter, a Chowan alumnus, had served as a Southern Baptist missionary journeyman to Kenya after his graduation from Campbell University.

On her part, Mei served as babysitter for the couple's two children. Through Carter and Carole Nicholson, a member of the music faculty, Mei Yan received invitations to play the violin in area churches and groups. Some paid her for her playing.

Nicholson is also choir director and organist at First Presbyterian Church of Ahoskie. After Mei played there at a Sunday morning worship service, the church offered to pay the final \$1,129 she owed on her tuition and fees.

Lewis said Mei has a "Christian background." Her uncle is a retired Lutheran pastor who was raised in Manchuria and ordained in Hong Kong in 1951. He now lives in Ohio with his wife.

In a letter to Lewis, the uncle explained that Mei's great grandparents and grandparents were Lutheran pastors in Manchuria. Her grandparents were imprisoned for many years. Her grandfather died in 1960 and her grandmother starved to death in 1966. Her father was once a student of the Baptist Truth Seminary in Peking. He is now concert master of Broadcasting Symphony Orchestra of China in Peking.

Mei and her violin are almost inseparable. At a recent dinner on the green she serenaded the students as they ate on the front lawn. Mei had violin in hand when the faculty and staff first met her at their semester-opening banquet. She played dinner background music. Almost every Sunday she plays at a church service and regularly plays at women's and civic groups.

Mei said she is happy with her choice of Chowan College. "I have made many friends among the students and faculty and staff. They are very friendly and helpful."

She said she likes the atmosphere of a small college and personal help she is receiving in English and her other subjects.

She reports she also loves Murfreesboro, "because it is quiet and pretty and the people are friendly."

## Grateful for Help

She says she is grateful for the outpouring of help and affection she has received from many different persons and groups. She gives special thanks to Dean Lewis, the Carter family, and Mrs. Nicholson for their support.

Mei Yan said she plans to continue her music studies at a senior college and then a conservatory in America after completing two years at Chowan. After that, "I would like to play in an orchestra in America or China."

## Mrs. Younts had strong Chowan ties

A woman with strong family ties to Chowan, Willie Camp Younts of Franklin, Va., wife of Charles R. Younts, a retired petroleum executive, died June 30, 1985 in her Atlanta home.

Dr. Bruce E. Whitaker said Mrs. Younts "expressed an appreciation for the purpose, program and service of the college and the cause of Christian higher education."

### Father was Trustee

Dr. Whitaker said Mrs. Younts' father, Paul D. Camp, served as a member of the Board of Trustees for over two decades (1885-1909) and supported the college in many ways.

A sister, Mrs. Texie Camp Marks of Boykins, Va., is a member of the Board of Advisors and has been active in development campaigns to advance the college. Another sister, the late Ruth Camp Campbell of Franklin, Va., supported many worthy

causes including Chowan, Whitaker noted. He said other family members have supported the college over the years.

### Franklin Native

Mrs. Younts, who with her husband was known for her philanthropic works, was born in Franklin.

After her marriage in 1930, she lived in various eastern states before moving to Atlanta in 1941, where Mr. Younts was president and later chairman of the board of Plantation Pipe Line Co.

She was a member of Second Ponce De Leon Baptist Church and chairman of its building committee. She maintained a wide interest in civic and social activities and had served as a member of the boards of the Henrietta Egleston Children's Hospital and the Church's Homes for Business Girls Inc.

She was the Georgia state regent for the Kenmore Association and

was president of the Neighborhood Garden Club and the Garden Clubs of Atlanta.

She was a graduate of Hollins College and had been awarded the Hollins Medal in recognition of her contributions to the college and to American society. She also had received the Algernon Sidney Sullivan Award, presented to individuals for their "spirit of love for and helpfulness to other men and women."

Since graduating from Hollins, she had assisted many students in attending the institution through gifts and scholarships and had served as a member of the board of trustees, the Hollins Alumnae Association and the Committee for Annual Giving. She was a member of the Piedmont Driving Club and the Capitol City Club. In Franklin, she had made possible the construction of the Willie Camp Younts Public Safety Building.