

Degrees, awards presented at Commencement

Dr. Spencer, Dr. Reid speakers

Mrs. Agnes White Thomas and M. Frank Edwards were named distinguished alumni during Chowan's graduation May 15 and Mrs. Phyllis Dewar was given the Excellence in Teaching Award.

Mrs. Thomas, a Hertford County native, was valedictorian of her 1927 Murfreesboro High School class and was voted most original girl in her 1931 Chowan graduating class.

Active Writer

Her marriage in 1932 to William Thomas of Norfolk delayed her writing career while she reared their four sons. Dr. Bruce E. Whitaker, president, related she sold her first article in 1950 "and she has been selling ever since."

Her hundreds of writings have appeared in many national publications and four of her books of light verse have been published. She taught creative writing at Old Dominion University, started the Norfolk Port of Entry Contest in 1960 and in 1976 organized the first Writer's Conference in the area.

Mrs. Thomas is active in church



Members of the Class of 1988 march in Helms Center to receive degrees and diplomas.

and civic affairs, working in community volunteer groups delivering mobile meals, conducting chapel services at local nursing homes and reading to the visually impaired. Her second son, Thomas, completed his two years at Chowan in 1961.

Edwards is a Rocky Mount resi-

dent where he is the owner of Walker-Ross Printing Company, Inc. He graduated from the Printing Technology course at Chowan in 1958 and worked for nine years in the printing department of Atlantic Coast Line Railroad.

He has stated his studies and training at Chowan and his experience with the railroad prepared him to operate his own business. He became a part owner in 1966 and sole owner in 1968.

Dr. Whitaker stated, "Under his leadership, the company has thrived. Increased business forced the company to make three moves into larger buildings. The present facility, erected in 1975, has undergone two additions. The company serves local, area and national clients."

Edwards is active in his community and church and is a member of the Education Committee and on the board of directors of the Printing Industries of the Carolinas. He is also a Chowan trustee. He and his wife, the former Carol Davis of Spring Hope, are the parents of a daughter.

Teaching Award

Mrs. Dewar has been a professor of science at Chowan since 1966. She was selected for the honor by her peers. A member of several professional organizations, she conducts special classes and demonstrations for younger students in local schools. She is married to Jim Dewar, also on the Science Department faculty. A member of Murfreesboro Baptist Church, she is a substitute organist there.

Degrees Awarded

Diplomas and degrees were presented to 133 graduates during the commencement exercises where Dr. Samuel Reid Spencer Jr., of Richmond, Va., was the featured speaker. He is president of the Virginia Foundation for Independent Colleges and president emeritus of Davidson College.

Dr. Spencer said the graduates were fortunate to have attended Chowan as it educates not only the mind but also the heart. "This world desperately needs people with educated hearts — people who cannot tolerate cruelty and injustice, whether it be in the Middle East, South Africa, the ghettos of our great cities or the poverty-ridden rural areas of our countryside."

He cautioned, "There will always be too many who do not care" but "if you will go on

developing your talents wherever you may be and that will give you the competence for whatever you choose to do."

Baccalaureate Address

The baccalaureate address was delivered by Dr. E. Leon Smith, pastor of Goldsboro's First Baptist Church and president of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

He advised, "Only God can be trusted with our futures. The One who set the stars in their courses

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Recipients of alumni awards

Mrs. Agnes White Thomas and M. Frank Edwards are pictured prior to the annual Commencement Exercises and receiving the Distinguished Alumni Awards for 1988. Mrs. Thomas was a member of the Class of 1931, while Edwards received his degree in 1958.



Receives teaching award

Mrs. Phyllis Dewar is applauded by members of the faculty as she goes on stage to receive the 1988 Excellence in Teaching Award. The recognition, determined by vote of the full faculty, was made at the annual Commencement Exercises, held on May 15.