Humorist **Grady Nutt** to speak

By EDDIE MARKS

The prime minister of humor is coming to Memorial Hall Wednesday night. Grady Nutt, a 6-foot-4, 210-pound selfproclaimed humorist will appear at 8 p.m. in Memorial to sing, juggle, "handbone" and play the tiple-a small, 10-string Spanish folk instrument.

"A tiple is a ukelele with thyroid trouble." Nutt says.

Nutt's show business career began in Texas in 1937 at the age of 3 when his mother put him on a chair so he could reach the microphone for a Sunday gospel music radio program. By age 13, Nutt was a licensed Southern Baptist

"My nickname was 'Rev.' in high school," Nutt says. "I never performed marriages, but the fact that I could made me awfully popular."

Nutt's last name has put him on the receiving end of a lot of jokes, he says.

"The second 't' in Nutt is very important. Without it I'm just like the rest of you." Nutt says he is a humorist, not a

comedian. "A humorist just isn't trying to crack jokes. He's an interpreter of life. He takes a common experience and filters it through his way of looking at things until it comes alive for another person."

Overwhelming demand for his performances made him decide to hit the professional touring circuit in 1969. Operating from his home base in



Grady Nutt

Louisville, Ky., Nutt has averaged more than 200 appearances a year across the .

"I haven't had to advertise," Nutt says. "People just hear about me through word-of-mouth. If they want me, they just call information. After all, how many Grady Nutts are there in Louisville?"

Nutt's performance is sponsored by the Campus Christian Fellowship. Phil Laughlin, campus minister, said Nutt packed the house in Memorial Hall two vears ago.

"We were listening to one of Nutt's albums this summer and we thought it would be nice to bring him back." Laughlin said. "He's not a Christian comedian, he's just plain funny. He's not going to be on the stage trying to convert anybody."

Tickets for Nutt's performance are on sale at the Carolina Union information desk for \$1. Tickets will be sold for \$1.25 at the door.

"We're charging just enough to break even," Laughlin said. "Nutt is well worth hearing."

Merritt's-'image of an old-fashioned store'

By BILL MCGOWAN Staff Writer

E.G. Merritt, 75, may be one of Chapel Hill's wealthiest men, yet he has pumped gas, chewed the fat and rung up sales at his service station-grocery store seven days a week for the past 50 years come

"I like to meet people and see people." he says. "I like to be on the job. I don't like to be loafing. I work a 15-hour day. I close up every night at 9."

But, to say that gasoline sales and general merchandising have been his only business ventures simply would be untrue. In his days, Merritt has run grading equipment, owned and operated a fleet of trucks and farmed about 17 acres of tobacco. It's in his emporiumservice station-grocery store, however, that Merritt truly has found his calling.

It's there that Merritt, clad in a green uniform, thrives. He can be recognized by the baseball cap on his head and the cigarette hanging from his mouth. His sharp eyes never miss a thing and as soon as he sees a car pull into the lot he is on his feet whether the people want gas or just directions.

Starting out in 1929 with Gulf Oil Co., Merritt's first station was on the corner of Purefoy and Pittsboro Street. It was not until 1940 that he moved across the street and opened the Esso (now Exxon) station at its current location.

Merritt, his mind fresh and full of

memories, recalls life as he has lived it. He leans against the wood stove or occassionally takes a chair between servicing cars. Friends come from all around to get gas, a loaf of bread or a quart of milk. In a corner the television carries a weekend game.

He stocks products from carburators to cornbeel. A service award, scenic paintings and ACC sports calendars cover the walls. A variety of notions clutter the extra window and counter space, all either hung from twine or stuck in racks. Merritt's Service Station is the image of an old-fashioned country store. Merritt's is a long-time meeting place

where college professors, retired farmers, working men and more than an occasional bearded student have been able to talk politics, swap fishing tales or just enjoy a cold drink. It has become a tradition in Chapel Hill. Merritt has seen lively days in the store.

Like when members of the infamous "Chinaberry Tree Gang", regulars at the station, dubbed themselves after a tree growing out back. They wired the sitting bench in the store with electric current. Merritt tells the story with particular delight and speaks of the unsuspecting victims of the prank, the perpetrators and a local black man named Peter Burnette who rolled in the floor with laughter at the surprised face of one of his closest friends. Of course all of this was done in the spirit of fun. Merritt had to remove the attraction when several victims failed

to see the fun in having their toes raised to their ears with a backside full of voltage. Another story Merritt tells is one he

heard from Livingston Taylor, now a singer himself and brother of James. Taylor recalls that as a small boy he and his brothers bought candy and sodas regularly at Merritt's. One day while buying his usual bag of jawbreakers. Taylor says he spotted a nickel on the floor next to the old wood stove. He made no fuss as he crept by the group of old men to pick up the treasure. But as he picked up the coin from the floor, he recalls, the laughter began. That nickel wouldn't come off the floor; because the men had it securely tacked in place.

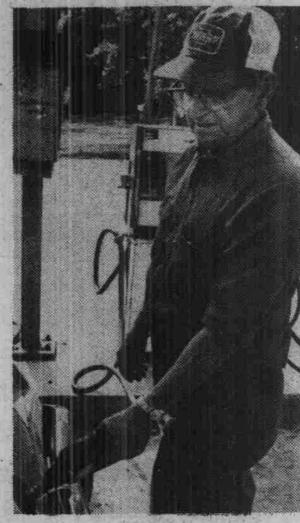
Several years ago a string band played regularly at the station. Banjo and guitar picking could be heard every Friday evening in the small store. Led by Ed Norwood, who has worked in the Woollen Gym basketroom for many years, the band drew many listeners.

"At one time the room got so crowded that the customers couldn't even get to the counter." Merritt says. Enthusiasm was later lost as throngs of students and locals flocked to Merritt's. The event was switched to Thursdays in an effort to cut the crowd, but the sessions eventually had to be stopped because they began to affect business with regular customers.

There has never been a truly dull moment for Eben Merritt since he started his business in 1929. Some things have changed, like the old car wash stall that's

now full of empty drink bottles and crates of the fact that now Merritt is among the largest landowners in Chapel Hill.

The long hours? He enjoys them. He handles each situation differently and with the ease only of a man who knows people.



Eben Merritt





The good of boys get together to have a beer and shoot the bull at Merritt's Exxon

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Campus Calendar

The first organizational meeting of the ECKANKAR Discussion Group will be at 7:30 p.m. in Room 213 Carolina Union. Paul Twitchell's book, "ECKANKAR: Key to Secret

Worlds", will be discussed The Chapel Hill Parks and Recreation Department is sponsoring watering-skiing instruction for teenagers and adults from 8 a.m.-6:30 p.m. Participants should meet at the Municipal Building parking lot and instruction will be on Lake Gaston. Cost is \$5. to be paid when registering. Bring

UPCOMING EVENTS International Association of Students in Business and Economics will have its annual membership drive meeting at 4:30 p.m. Tuesday in T-6 New Carroll Hall. All students nerested in jobs overseas should attend.

A unitions for the B.S.M. Gospel Choir will be held 6-8 p.m.

Tuesday in Upendo. There is a special need for bass and tenor singers and pianists. All former Toronto Exchange members will meet at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday in the second floor lounge of the Carolina Union. It is important that all members attend. If you cannot. please contact either Cindy (929-5829), Chip (929-0009).

Radar (929-9302) or Molly (967-5138). The Outing Club will meet at 7 p.m. Tuesday in Rooms 207-209 Carolina Union. Everyone is welcome. Members of the I.E. Speech Team will demonstrate their

talents from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Tuesday in front of Wilson Library. All are welcome. The Campus Governing Council will meet at 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday in Room 103 Caldwell Hall. The Association for Women Students will have its organizational meeting at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday in Room 215

Interviews for the North Carolina Student Legislature will be held 7-9 p.m. Sept. 5-8 in the Carolina Union lounge. Applications are available at the Union information desk.

ITEMS OF INTEREST Anyone who failed to make it for the YACKETY YACK organizational meeting last Tuesday should stop by the office as soon as possible to fill out an application form. The Social Committee of the Carolina Union will hold a

pizza eating contest at 2 p.m. Sept. 7. There is a \$2 entry fee. Be among the first 35 people to sign up at the Union information The Walk for Humanity Committee of the Campus Y is

making preparations now for the walk next spring. Please Get your free WXYC bumper sticker now. The new logo is printed on durable, weather-resistant vinyl. Go by the station (in the basement of the Carolina Union) anytime it is on the

Drivers and riders wishing to carpool to an anti-nuclear, pro-conservation rally at the N.C. Utilities Commission hearing on conservation Wednesday morning Sept. 6 in Raleigh, please call ECOS at 933-3757 or Carol at 967-1382. The annual Tuesday Evening Concert Series of the UNC music department will open with the North Carolina Chamber Players, under the direction of clarinetist Donald Martin, at & p.m. Sept. 5 in Hill Hall. The free, public performance is the first of 21 being sponsored this fall by the UNC music department as part of its Tuesday and Thursday Evening Concert Series and Sundays-at-Four performances. The Carolina Club Football Team now is practicing for its fall season opener against league champion, ASU. If you're interested in playing contact football on a non-varsity **********************



intercollegiate level, call Mack at 967-9963 or come to the next practice at 5:30 p.m. Sept. 5 on Eagles Field. The undergraduate library is offering tours of Wilson Library and the undergraduate library. Meet at 10 a.m., noon and 4 p.m. for the one-hour tours Sept. 5-8 at The 1.1.

The Chapel Hill Shape-Note Singers will hold the first of their monthly singings from 2-5 p.m. on Sunday in Person Hall. Books will be available. The group welcomes all persons interested in joining informal singing of early American choral settings of folk spirituals. The position of Elections Board Chairperson is now open. Applications are available in Suite C Carolina Union. Please

return all applications by Sept. 15. The APO Book Co-op Cash Back continues today and ends Sept. 5 (closed Labor Day weekend) in Rooms 202-204 Carolina Union from 9:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. Remember to bring your blue slips.

Any seniors interested in helping plan senior class activities are asked to sign up on the Senior Activities Committee at the Union information desk through Sept. 2. Join the Campus Community Link in helping our senior

citizens. For more information, contact the Campus Y at 933-Professional business assistance is available for campus and community organizations free of charge through the Graduate

School of Business Administration. Call 933-8301, extension The Sword of Peace Outdoor Repertory Company of Snow Camp. N.C., is offering discount admission of \$1 to UNC students with IDs for its performance of Shakespeare's As You Like It at 8:45 tonight. Call 376-6948 for reservations and

Charlotte students: don't forget to vote in the Sept. 8 liquor riders, call Carol at 933-7734 or David at 933-7754. Sign-up sheets for Senior Class Advisory Committee are at the Carolina Union desk. All interested seniors are urged to

apply. Today is the last day. Boxing and sparring instruction will be given at 3 p.m. every Sunday afternoon in the Wrestling Room, downstairs, Woollen Gym.

Looking for a chance to become involved in community service? Volunteer as a tutor for elementary or junior high students in Chapel Hill. Applications available in Room 102 Campus Y. Required orientation meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Sept. 19 in 08 Peabody Hall.

Medical College Admission Test will be administered Sept. 30. Applications must be postmarked by Sept. I (absolutely no late applications). Last chance to take this test for admission to nedical schools in fall 1979. Pick up applications and 1978-79 Update to "Predent-Premed Preview Review" at Predent-Premed Advising Office in 311 South Building or 101 Nash Hall (across from Carolina Inn parking lot)...

The Cellar Door, UNC's literary magazine, is seeking new staff members. Applications are available at the Cellar Door office on the second floor of the Campus Y and at the Union information desk. They are due Sept. 12 at the Y



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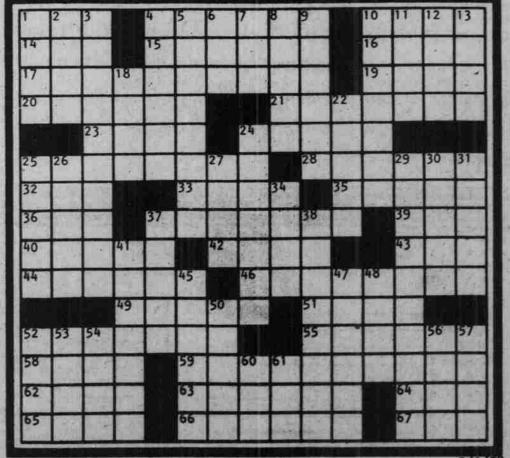
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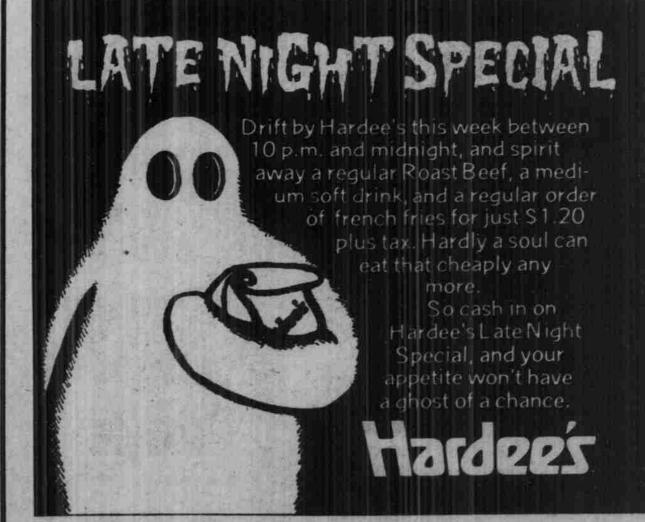
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