

Convocation series kicked off monday with two lectures

CRYSTAL DAVIS
Staff Writer

Professor Edward James, author and medieval scholar from Reading University, visited Meredith's campus on Monday, September 29.

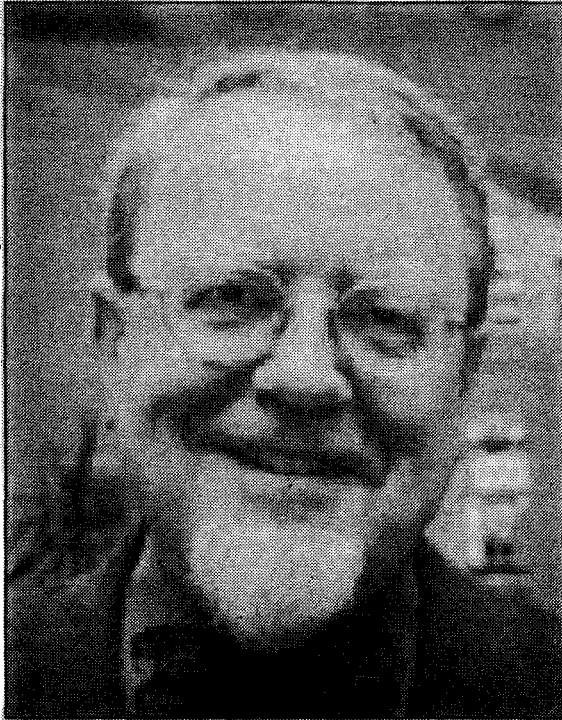
For a 10:00 a.m. lecture on Monday morning, Jones auditorium had a pleasant turn out. James' visit was the first of many activities to come in the next year concerning the convocation series for the medieval studies department.

His first lecture was entitled *A Queen on Trial: Was Fredegund Really a Serial Assassin?* Meredith's Brent Pitts, professor of Foreign Languages and Literatures, introduced the lecture with the help of Jeannette Rogers, an English major at Meredith with a medieval studies

minor.

In her introduction, Rogers said that though James is a wonderful historian, and he is also known for his keen eye for the future seen in his novels on science fiction. He has also been associated with the making of television series *Babylon Five* and he is a well-known science fiction author. Her introduction ended with the question of whether or not James is a Renaissance man?

James answered this question with a simple, "No, I'm not a Renaissance man" and dove right into his lecture. He stated that not very much is known about the period during Fredegund's reign and he enlightened



Author Edward James

Photo courtesy of Meredith College website

his audience with an extensive background of the time through the eyes of Gregory, her son, who wrote an extensive history

of the infamous queen.

There were few queens of the time and Fredegund was the most notorious for her murder, scandal and betrayal. Some even thought of her as a barbarian. She was accused of the murder of her husband, stepsons, other family members, a king, a bishop, and even her nurse who she thought caused her newborn's death. She even tried to kill her own daughter for political reasons.

While most accept Gregory's portrayal of Fredegund's ruthless rule, there are few that doubt his

credibility. Those few may claim that Gregory actually just documented flavorful, though horrible, rumors of the queen. Others may claim that because Gregory believed almost every person to be damned to hell, including many of the actual clergy people, that he believed the ruthless rumors to be true and so documented.

James also gave a lecture in Jones Auditorium entitled *The Lord of the Rings and the Middle Ages* at 7:30 p.m. on September 29.

As part of the convocation series, on February 16, 2004, Meredith College will celebrate its Founders Day with a performance by Rondellus, a medieval musical group from Tallin, Estonia.

Meredith gets a new honor society

HEATHER
TAYLOR
Contributing Writer

The Department of History and Politics instituted a new chapter of Pi Sigma Alpha-The National Political Science Honor Society. The Pi Sigma Alpha charter has been highly anticipated by those majoring in political studies. Pi Sigma Alpha was founded in 1920 and is recognized as a member of the Association of College Honor Societies. There are over 600 chapters in colleges and universities nationwide.

An induction was held on September 12 at the alumnae house, where Mayor Charles Meeker was the guest speaker. Mayor Meeker spoke of the importance of civil engagement and being involved within local government.



This year's inductees for Pi Sigma Alpha.

Photo courtesy of the Department of History and Politics.

The Meredith College chapter (Alpha Beta Zeta) was established on September 12, 2003. The

charter was presented to Dr. Michael Novak as head of the department. The memberships were

awarded to the following: Tricia Johnson, Margaret Ann Cooney, Carol Johnson, Erin Elizabeth

Callis, Jacqueline Schaffer, Lauren Strawbridge, Meredith Tuck, Diane Hall, Paige Rose King, Rebecca Lee, Sejal Patel, Adrian Lovelace, Sarah Hook, and to the following professors: Barbara True-Weber, Jim Piazza, Clyde Frazier. An honorary award was given to Mayor Charles Meeker. The recipients of this outstanding honor receive a permanent membership in the honor society.

The awards were given to those who maintained an overall GPA of 3.5 and also had completed at least 10 hours of political studies with a GPA of a 3.0. If you are majoring in political studies and are interested in how you can join this honor society, please contact Dr. Barbara True-Weber, the advisor for Pi Sigma Alpha.