

The Hilltop



Mars Hill, N.C. 28754

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M.H.C. Receives Million Dollar Gift

A gift of \$1,000,000 — largest contribution in its 122-year history — has been received by Mars Hill College from J. Wesley Grayson of Laguna Hills, Calif.

The money will be used to create the Grayson Scholarship Endowment, out of which the college will offer \$4,000 scholarships to outstanding high school students graduating in the upper 10 percent of their class. This will make the newly endowed scholarships the most valuable of all scholarships offered by the Baptist college.

"I am thrilled almost beyond words," said Dr. Fred Bentley, president of the college, in accepting the gift personally from Mr. Grayson Thursday. "I accept this magnificent gift as an expression of confidence in the college and in our faculty, staff and students."

Dr. Richard Hoffman, vice president for academic affairs, was equally elated over the gift.

"Students with superior academic skills and leadership qualities are essential to the vitality of a liberal arts college such as ours," he said. "They help provide the stimulation and challenge which are needed in order to have a dynamic community of learning. We will use Mr. Grayson's gift to help us attract more such students."

The newly established endowment fund to support the scholarship program will be managed by the finance committee of the college's Board of Trustees. J. Alvin Philpott of Burlington Industries in Lexington is chairman; other members include Ed Beach of Lenoir, Roy Brock of Canton, Rom Sparks and Benjamin Knott of Charlotte, Carl Meares of Fair Bluff, and Dr. Robert Wren of Gastonia.

Now retired, Mr. Grayson has long been identified with education and finance. He earned bachelor's and master's degrees from DePauw University in



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Greencastle, Ind., and for many years was associate professor of economics and finance at the University of Kansas and at Ohio State University.

He established and managed the O-

hio office of a brokerage firm with membership in the New York Stock Exchange and the Chicago Board of Trade.

For 20 years prior to his retirement he was a tax economist with the Internal

Revenue Service in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Grayson's wife, Polly, is an alumna of Mars Hill College, Class of 1934; and her family has long been associated with the school. Her uncle, Dr. Robert Lee Moore, was president from 1897 until 1938. Her mother, Mrs. Clara Wall of Mars Hill, and her late father, Roy Wall, both attended the college as did her sister and two brothers.

Final details on the guidelines under which the scholarships will be offered will be worked out soon, according to Dr. Hoffman, and information will be circulated to prospective students who are interested in applying.

Being chosen as a Grayson Scholar will mean more to a student than simply receiving financial aid, Dr. Hoffman elaborated. Each Grayson Scholar will participate in a specially designed academic component intended to enhance his/her capacity for leadership and to enrich life.

The million-dollar gift comes at a particularly auspicious time for the Baptist college, which is in the midst of a 10-year, \$10 million, "Excellence in Action" development plan. Campus buildings and other facilities, the academic program, scholarships, and endowment are all a part of the development plan.

"Wes Grayson's gift," added Dr. Bentley, "is not only an expression of faith in the college but also an expression of his appreciation for America and of his belief in the free enterprise system. He tells me he counts himself fortunate to live in a land where he has been free to work hard, invest wisely, take the risks, and reap the benefits. His upbringing impressed him with the integrity of hard work, and he knows and appreciated the value of a good education. He takes great pride in being able to make this generous gift to a Christian college which is striving to offer its students exceptional educational opportunities."

Festival Foresight

During the first weekend in October, mountain musicians, dancers, and craftsmen will gather on the campus of Mars Hill College to honor the memory of Bascom Lamar Lunsford, and to carry on the tradition he started a half-century ago.

The eleventh annual Bascom Lamar Lunsford Minstrel of the Appalachias will open Thursday evening, October 5, with a program of mountain dancers beginning at 7 p.m. in Moore Auditorium. Over 14 dance teams, featuring both clogging and smooth styles, will perform as will several "buck" dancers.

On Friday evening, October 6, a special emphasis will be placed on ballad singing. According to many mountain

music aficionados, old-time ballad singing is becoming a lost art. Festival officials have asked several of the area's best known ballad singers to participate in a more intimate, workshop-type event which will be held in the college's Owen Theatre, beginning at 7 p.m.

Saturday still remains the big day for the festival. Lunsford originally conceived of the festival as a celebration of the mountain way of life; a time when old friends could get together, play the old tunes, dance the dances, and preserve these traditional ways by passing them on to a new generation. To this end, festival administrators have enlisted the help of numerous craftsmen, homemakers, musicians, and

dancers who know the old ways intimately and still practice them. Beginning at 10 a.m. Saturday, October 7, demonstrations in spinning and weaving, wood carving, quilt and doll making, shingle splitting, and whittling will be held. A homemaking exhibition will also be held, featuring cooking on wood-burning stoves, home-made sausage biscuits, buttermilk churning, and making apple butter.

A special event for children is also planned and there will be songs and dances as well as handicrafts which the child can take home with him. There will also be workshops featuring well-known musicians in flat-picking a guitar, clawhammer and old-time banjo playing, old-time fiddling, and playing the Appalachian dulcimer among others. These events, including the jam sessions that go on all day, will be held on the lawn between the Country Boutique and Bridges Cafeteria, with

the exception of the workshops which will be held in and around Anderson Amphitheatre.

Several special events are planned for the Appalachian Room of Memorial Library on Saturday. These include a photographic exhibition and an exhibition of artifacts and tools from the college's Edward W. Stock Collection. This collection is made up of primitive tools and implements used in the everyday lives of early mountain settlers. All events during the day Saturday are free of admission charges.

On Saturday evening, the Minstrel of the Appalachias will start at 7 p.m. in Moore Auditorium. Musicians and dancers from throughout the area will gather to celebrate the memory of Lunsford and the way of life he dedicated himself to preserving.

(Cont. On Pg. 4)