

The Mars Hill College Hilltop



Mars Hill, N.C. 28754

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Building's Opening Highlights Homecoming

Saturday, October 14 will be a busy day at Mars Hill. The school will celebrate its annual Homecoming with a full slate of activities during the day and evening.

The highlight of the day's activities will be the formal dedication of Blackwell Hall, the college's new \$1.5 million administrative center. Ceremonies for the event will begin on a patriotic note at 11 a.m. with the presentation of a new American flag and a new flag pole for the newly landscaped center quadrangle by the Woodmen of the World. Two Asheville chapters will make the presentation.

Dr. and Mrs. Hoyt Blackwell, for whom the building is named, will cut a ribbon to the middle floor entrance officially opening the new structure. Dr. Blackwell, president emeritus of the college, served as president from 1938 to 1966. He had also been a member of the faculty at Mars Hill since 1928.

The current president of the college, Dr. Fred B. Bentley, will preside over the festivities. Others participating in the ceremony will be Dr. Otis Duck, Mars Hill physician and chairman of the Board of Trustees; Harold Austell of Greenville, S.C., chairman of the Board of Advisors; and Dr. James Kessarar of Hendersonville, co-president of the Alumni Association.

The new building will allow the major administrative offices of the college to be housed under one roof for the first time in the history of the school. Five areas within the building will give special recognition to individuals or families. The con-

ference center on the first floor will be designated as the Peterson Conference Center in memory of Myron C. Peterson, Jr., son of Mr. and Mrs. M. C. Peterson, Sr. of Asheville. The Development Suite, also on the first floor, will honor Mr. and Mrs. Guy Carswell of Charlotte. The Admissions Suite of the middle floor will honor the late Carl G. Fox of Hickory. The President's Suite, on the top floor, will honor Mr. and Mrs. Rom Sparks of Charlotte, and the President's Conference Room will pay tribute to the late Mrs. Rose Addie Deaver Logan, who served the college as a trustee for many years.

Other events surrounding the building's dedication include an exhibition of 60 woodblock color prints by famed Japanese artist Ando Hiroshige. The delicate color prints were completed during the middle of the 19th century and are valued at \$15,000. They were given to the college by Dr. Burt P. Johnson of Cary, who will be on hand to discuss the prints and answer questions about them. The prints will go on exhibit at 8:30 a.m. and may be viewed until 2:30 p.m. in the first floor conference center of the new building.

An additional highlight of the weekend will be the luncheon in the college cafeteria honoring the Alumnus and Alumna of the Year. This year the college will honor Walter Glenn of Statesville and Mrs. Jeanne Hoffman.

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Craftsmen, Musicians to Gather for Annual Festival

The Eleventh Annual Bascom Lamar Lunsford Mountain Music and Dance Festival was founded by Lunsford and Mars Hill pharmacist Ed Howard primarily as a time for folks to get together to play their favorite tunes, celebrate their way of life, and especially as a time when traditions could be passed from the older generations to the younger people.

According to some officials, one of these traditions - ballad singing - has not attracted as many participants as other musical forms and in fact may be in danger of dying out. To prevent this, and in maintaining the traditions set down by Mr. Lunsford, Friday evening, October 6, will feature a special evening of ballads and ballad singers in Owen Theatre beginning at 7 p.m.

Before industrialization and mass communication, traditional unaccom-

panied ballad singing took place in nearly every part of America. Now, they remain alive in only a very few places. One of these places is the Sodom Laurel section of Madison County. First documented in 1916 by English folksong collector Cecil Sharp, the Sodom Laurel community remains one of the extremely few "living" communities of ballad singers. They have continued to receive attention from folklorists at the Library of Congress, the Smithsonian Institute, the N. C. Folk Music and Archives, and numerous folklife festivals.

The singers who will participate in Friday evening's activities represent four generations of ballad singers in the same community. They are Cas Wallin, Evelyn Ramsey, Berzilla Wallin, Delle Norton, Sheila Rice, Darlene Cody, and Bobby McMillan. Festival officials have

also persuaded Dr. Cratis Williams, well-known Appalachian scholar, to be the master of ceremonies for the evening.

The ballads sung by these traditionalists are long narrative songs which can be traced back to 17th and 18th Century England, and their significance lies in both their words and the tunes. Though the songs have changed in some ways they are still recognizable to historians and retain their references to castles, and lords and ladies. The ballads have been passed down in the Sodom Laurel community orally; that is, they were never written down or learned from books.

The Lunsford Festival will open officially Thursday evening, October 5, with an evening of mountain dancing in Moore Auditorium. The festival continues through Saturday, with craft exhi-

bitions, woodstove cooking and home-making demonstrations, workshops in many mountain musical instruments, street dancing, jam sessions, and a special event for children. These activities will be held on the lawn between the Country Boutique and Bridges Cafeteria from 10 a.m. through 4 p.m.

Saturday evening, musicians and dancers will gather to honor the memory of Mr. Lunsford and to carry on the tradition he began nearly half a century ago. "The Minstrel of the Appalachias," will begin at 7 p.m. In keeping with Mr. Lunsford's wishes, none of the events during the three days are competitive, but rather serve as a time of celebration and learning.

