

MERRY CHRISTMAS



THE HILLTOP



VOLUME LVI, Number 4

Serving the Mars Hill College Community

Thursday, DECEMBER 9, 1982

The Christmas Gift From The Drama and Art Depts.

The music, drama, and art departments at Mars Hill College are combining their talents to present a Christmas present to the community. This gift will include the 85 voice chorus, the brass ensemble, the school's Aeolian-Skinner organ which has 65 ranks and four manuals, a speech choir, and art works depicting the birth of Christ.

Dr. William Thomas, assistant professor of music at the college and director of the chorus, explains that "We already had a Christmas concert on the schedule, and I began thinking that we could do something other than the traditional stand-up-on-the-risers-and-sing concert."

Visuals were the first departure from the traditional staging Dr. Thomas considered. "I knew Dr. Virgil Gray had successfully used slides in several of the plays he had directed, so I approached him about the feasibility of using slides in conjunction with the music."

Dr. Gray decided on a back-projection screen coupled with a high-power projector to insure enough light. Once the technicalities were settled, the matter turned to the chairman of the art department, Joe Chris Robertson, for assistance in selecting works to project. He selected a wide range of art from the temporary to master works of artists from the Renaissance through the Romantic eras.

The selection of music came next. "I had read out all of the esoteric music that



PHOTO BY DAVID WACHTER

Wren College Union changed its look on Tuesday as the campus celebrated an "Old Fashioned Christmas."

choirs sometimes like to sing," stated Thomas, "because I wanted this to be a time that everyone could come together and share in the story of Christ's coming."

Traditional Christmas carols will play an important role in the concert, including a candlelit "Silent Night." Selections from Bach's Christmas oratorio will serve as transitions from music to narration, and portions of the Lutheran Advent chorale will also be sung.

The narration will be provided by the Speech Choir, a 20-member chorus of 10 male and 10 female voices especially formed to present dramatic readings.

Their text will be taken from the Bible, and will include Old Testament prophets foretelling the Messiah's coming as well as the New Testament story of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem.

"There came a time when I thought all of this might end up looking 'gimmicky,'" notes Dr. Thomas, "but after several rehearsals and viewing the slides, I believe that this will be a moving experience for all who attend."

The concert will be presented Thursday evening, December 9, at 8:15 p.m. in the college's Moore Auditorium. There will be no admission charge and the public is invited to participate.

SART Achieves Honors

The North American Association of Summer Sessions (NAASS) has awarded Mars Hill College its highest honor for a non-credit summer program during the association's annual conference held in Vancouver, British Columbia, recently.

"A Week in the World of a Professional Repertory Theatre" was selected by the Innovative and Creative Awards Committee of NAASS for its total immersion of participants in the life of the Southern Appalachian Repertory Theatre, which is based at the college during the summer. James W. Thomas, managing director of the theatre, was also the instructor for the class.

Trustee Meeting

Mars Hill College's Board of Trustees will hold their semi-annual business meeting Friday, December 10, beginning at 10 am in Harris Media Center. The trustees will review the President's Report on 1981-82, an accounting of the year's activities, and other business.

This will be the first meeting for several new trustees, who will attend although their terms do not officially begin until January 1, 1983.

Those new members include Mrs. Mollie Millis Hedgecock, an accountant and farmer from High Point; Bernard Lennon, an Evergreen farmer and business man who is an alumnus; the Rev. Jack Painter of Belmont, also a Mars Hill alumnus and pastor of the First Baptist Church in Belmont; and Samuel Rutland of Charlotte, owner of Rutland Plastics.

Other trustees who have served a previous term and will be beginning a new term on the 36-member board include Elizabeth Baker of Marshall; Kyle Carver of Leicester; Webb Ellis of Asheville; L. Alvin Philpott of Lexington; Rom Sparks of Charlotte; and Leonard Tilson of Winston-Salem.