

John Foster West, Novelist And Poet, ASU's First Fulltime Resident Writer

Appalachian State University has employed John Foster West, novelist and poet, as its first full-time writer-in-residence. West will teach journalism, advanced composition and a course in freshman English, as well as a section of creative writing. Additionally, he will be sponsor of the student newspaper, The Appalachian.

West is the author of two hardbound books: "Up Ego," a collection of poetry published in 1951, and a novel, "Time Was," issued by Random House three years ago. He is now revising a second novel which he hopes to have ready sometime this winter.

Son of a tenant farmer in Wilkes, Caldwell and Burke counties, West attended nine different schools before graduating from high school in Morganton.

He attended Mars Hill Junior College and received his B.A. degree in journalism from UNC-Chapel Hill in 1947. Two years later, he received his Master's in English also at Chapel Hill where he studied creative writing under Phillips Russell and in 1947 was a runner-up in the Dodd, Meade Intercollegiate Fellowship, a novels competi-

tion. He did further graduate work at UNC and at the State University of Iowa.

Besides working, West found time to earn a football letter at Mars Hill. "I was a six-foot, 149 pound guard, if you can imagine that," he said. "I was just plain mean—a hill-boy." He was also a miler and two-mile track man in junior college. Two years in a row he won the Southeastern Junior College Conference Championship in both events. At UNC, he was a member of the cross-country track team.

Before coming to Appalachian, West taught creative writing for nine years at Elon College and for 10 years at Virginia's Old Dominion College, where he established a journalism program.

"I write novels to please myself and a public. I write poetry only to please myself. If anyone else likes it, so much the better."



JOHN FOSTER WEST

I write poetry to satisfy an inner need," said West. His poetry has appeared in The Atlantic Monthly, Lyric and the Carolina Quarterly, a UNC literary magazine of which he was co-founder in 1948.

During and after his college years, West had published several paperback adventure stories under pen names. He also had written adventure and science fiction short stories for several magazines. However, making a hit in the hardback field came slowly. Before acceptance of "Time Was," West had submitted seven novels each of which had been rejected for publication.

The setting of his first novel is Wilkes County, near the town of Ferguson, and the story is "about 80 per cent true," West said, "based on my mother's and father's lives." He plans a sequel covering the first 10 years of his own life.

The bulk of the novel is a flashback telling of the marriage of 17-year-old Alvira Matlock to Will Ward, a rough-hewn widower with several children older than Alvira. The rest of the novel concerns John Ward, their son, who returns to the hills in an attempt to understand his now-dead father.

The setting for West's current novel ("In Solema Form") is in Lenoir, with the cities of Boone and Blowing Rock playing a part in the work (Actual placenames will be disguised), in which two young lawyers break the will of an old man who has left his estate to a cousin.

As in his first book, West is using regional dialect but to a

lesser extent. Discussing southern regional writers and the use of dialect forms, West commented, "I think that they are good and have a definite place, but I also think the public is getting to the point they aren't interested in that sort of thing anymore."

"I think a book has to reflect the region in which it occurs, but it must contain enough of a universal appeal so that readers in other areas can find it worthwhile. I think that dialect is fine, but you have to be careful not to use too much. You have to capture the rhythm and use an occasional dialectical phrase."

Also a folklore enthusiast, the university's resident writer has written for North Carolina Folklore magazine. Other non-fiction articles have appeared under his name in national magazines, the latest being for The Writer about the tribulation of publishing a first novel.

Currently vice chairman of the North Carolina writer's Conference, John Foster West will be its chairman next year. The organization comprises professional writers and book editors and he hopes to have the yearly meeting in Boone. West says "I write about this region and I want to stay around the people I'm interested in." At Appalachian, he plans to start a literary magazine sometime within the year.

A widower, West lives on Faculty Street, Boone, with two of his three children, daughter Leah, 12, and his son, Kimbo, age 10. An older daughter, Betsy, is a social worker for the city of Norfolk, Va.



NORTH CAROLINA'S CONGRESSMEN Charles R. Jonas and James T. Broyhill are presented "Watchdog of the Treasury" awards by John C. Mason, President of the National Associated Businessmen, Inc. The citation in the award is for an "outstanding economy voting record." The National Associated Businessmen is a non-partisan organization whose goals include fiscal responsibility in government and the elimination of the Federal government from competition with private enterprise.

Crafts For Christmas Class Being Sponsored

Through the co-operation of the Appalachian State University Industrial Arts Department, the W. H. Plemmons Student Center is sponsoring a free non-credit class in Crafts For Christmas.

Participation will be limited to ASU staff, faculty or student and their husbands or wives. Enrollment will be limited to not less than 10 nor more than 16 per class.

The class will meet on Monday nights from 6:30-9:30 beginning Oct. 14 and will cover seven class meetings. Place of the meeting will be Room 210 of the Industrial Arts Building, and participants will purchase materials through the Industrial Arts Department.

Anyone interested in taking this class should contact the director's office, W.H. Plem-

mons Student Center (Room 214, Ext. 324) to sign up for the class. Deadline for sign-up is 5 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 10, in order to be enrolled.

The Student Center plans to offer classes in art, dancing, home mechanics, music and bridge throughout the year. Definite plans will be made soon.

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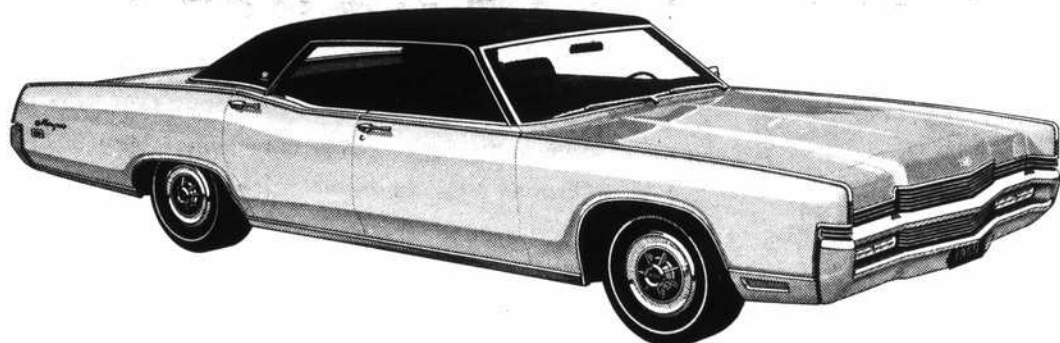
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BALL TO AID HUMPHREY

George W. Ball has resigned from the U.N. ambassadorship to devote his full time to campaign for Vice President Humphrey, Democratic candidate for President. President Johnson praised Ball's "dedicated and distinguished contributions to public service."

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