

## STEPHEN CAMBRELING COWPER

Stephen Cowper has done several things.

Raised in Kinston, with a B.A. from UNC in 1960 and a law degree in 1963, he practiced maritime law in Norfolk until 1967, then left for Alaska -- where he found, in his words, "a completely classless society . . . that measures you on the basis of your character." In Fairbanks he practiced law, became assistant district attorney, and operated an air taxi service for remote parts of the state. As the seventies began, he went as a war correspondent to Southeast Asia. Back in Fairbanks in 1974, he was elected to the first of two terms in the Alaska legislature. In 1982 he ran unsuccessfully for governor, then in 1986 was elected to a term that ends this December. He has said he does not want a second term because there are so many other things yet to do in Alaska.

As governor he has faced several challenges. Widely publicized was the largest oil spill in history from the Exxon Valdez. In that crisis his diverse background, which includes marine research as well as maritime law, stood him in good stead. Also the economy of his state has slowed, forcing Governor Cowper to deal with budget shortfalls.

The major accomplishment of his term may be the Alaska Science and Technology Foundation. With a hundred-million dollar endowment, it is the first state foundation in the country designed to promote scientific research and technical innovation. He has also led in the expansion of trade with countries of the Pacific Rim and in melting the "ice curtain" between Alaska and the Soviet Union.

In its sons and daughters the University cherishes enterprise, courage, and vision. In Stephen Cowper's career these qualities shine brightly enough to be visible a continent away, and we take pride in bestowing on him a Distinguished Alumnus Award.

## CHARLES LUKE POWELL

Luke Powell's photographs astonish with their beauty. Were one before us, we would need few words.

An accidental stay in Afghanistan brought his career into focus. A religion major at UNC in the late sixties, he went two summers to Israel for archaeological digs, then returned in 1971 following a Masters in Religious Studies at Yale. At the end of that summer he visited India and, when war erupted between Pakistan and India, escaped to Kabul, where winter closed in, making travel impossible. In Afghanistan, he said, he found a society "rushing headlong into the thirteenth century" and a scenic world visually more exciting than anything he had ever seen. To photograph it became imperative.

The marvelous color in his pictures, their depth of perspective, sharpness of line -- such qualities derive from the compositional process he employs. Despite the control and permanence it provides, the dye transfer process is so demanding that few photographers attempt it. In a spirit of craftsmanship reminiscent of pre-industrial life, Luke Powell has made it his own. But the pictures come from his vision. Most comfortable with serene human experience in relation to desert, mountain, and sky, he always exposes the formal structure of his scene.

Two exhibits of his work now circulate -- The Afghan Folio and Paris in Winter -- and the schedule is vigorous -- over fifty exhibitions in the past few years. Among them: the Sackler Gallery at the Smithsonian Institution, the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, the United Nations in New York and also its headquarters in Geneva, Fotografie Forum of Frankfurt in Germany. The Afghan Folio even hung for two months at Spasso House, residence of the American Ambassador in Moscow.

Already widely known in the world of visual arts, Luke Powell still challenges himself to develop. For his achievement and to cheer him on his way, we are pleased to bestow on him this Distinguished Alumnus Award.

## ELEANOR BERNERT SHELDON

Scholar, administrator, corporate director -- those are the facets of Eleanor Sheldon's career.

With a B.A. from UNC in 1942, she spent the war years in Washington producing population statistics as a government demographer. In 1949 she was awarded a doctorate in sociology at the University of Chicago, where -- as a William Rainey Harper fellow -- she guided Chicago's Community Inventory Research Project. Though she later taught at Columbia and UCLA and conducted studies for the UN, she has channeled most of her work through research foundations. During the 1960s the Russell Sage Foundation sponsored her basic research in the crucial area of measuring social change. In 1972 she became president of the Social Science Research Council, one of the world's leading social research organizations, and served in that post until retiring in 1979. Her own published work includes America's Children (1958) and Pupils and Schools in New York City (1965), and she participated in studies of Indicators of Social Change (1968) and Family Economic Behavior (1973). Along the way she also shared her insights and judgment with some of America's largest corporations as a director of The Equitable Life Assurance Society, Citicorp/Citibank, Mobil Oil, and H. J. Heinz. Among not for profit organizations she served as a trustee of both the Rockefeller Foundation and the Rand Corporation.

Her influence in honorary organizations has been widespread and profound -- as a fellow of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences, a member of the Institute of Medicine at the National Academy of Sciences, and a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. In the corporate world a colleague describes her as our "strongest, most effective and respected Director. . . . a pioneering woman who has brought a new dimension to the American corporate board room." For a lifetime of achievement we are pleased to salute Eleanor Sheldon with this Distinguished Alumna Award.