

IDA HOWELL FRIDAY

Ida Friday resolved many years ago that lending her name, good will, and nod of support to a worthy cause is not enough. Far more difficult and far more beneficial is the process of making that cause personally her own. This role she has unfailingly performed for more than a half-century.

A native of South Carolina and graduate of Meredith College in Raleigh, she came to this campus to earn her Master of Public Health degree in 1948. She remained in the School of Public Health for four additional years as Instructor and Workshop Director. Her marriage to William C. Friday wed her also to the fortunes of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Both marriages have prospered!

Ida Friday eagerly undertook her years of service to the University, the town of Chapel Hill, the region, and the state. She was one of the founders of The Roanoke Island Historical Association, a member of its Advisory Board for fifteen years, also serving as Chair of its Advisory Board. A special project was to guarantee the continued success of the production of the world-renowned outdoor drama, The Lost Colony. She has also been a member and President of the Chapel Hill Preservation Society, the organization that was inaugurated as a result of her original proposal.

She has served on boards for the North Carolina Symphony Society, the American Dance Festival, the League of Women Voters, the Children's Home Society of North Carolina, the Chapel Hill Bicentennial Commission, the Governor's Cultural Advisory Committee, the Hospital Auxiliary of North Carolina Memorial Hospital, and the North Carolina Public Television Foundation. She worked with the Orange County Women's Center.

Her energetic service has been widely recognized, including the awarding of the Citizen of the Year Award (1974) by the Chapel Hill-Carrboro Chamber of Commerce; the North Carolina Public Service Award (1981); and the University Award (1985), conferred by the Board of Governors of the University of North Carolina. Buildings named for her and her husband have been dedicated at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte and the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, as well as the William and Ida Friday Center for Continuing Education here.

A pioneering woman who exercised power through the performance of service and influence through personal example, Ida Friday has known the satisfaction of responding unselfishly to the needs of others. For her legacy of service and the warm affection she has stirred, the University today attempts to return its gratitude with this Distinguished Alumna Award.

MARTHA NELL ZANT HARDY

The art of the spoken word publicly performed has been at the center of Martha Nell Hardy's unique and distinguished career. Receiving her Master of Arts degree in Dramatic Art from this University in 1951, she returned in 1964 as a Lecturer in what was then the Speech Division of the Department of English. Until her retirement in 1990, she taught courses in solo and group performance of literature to thousands of students. Her special gifts for teaching were acknowledged when she received the Tanner Award for Excellence in Teaching in 1980. She was chosen by the Class of 1982 to be its Commencement Speaker.

More than an academic exercise, her display of the art of oral communication extends to her role as actress as well. This summer she completed her twenty-seventh year performing in Unto These Hills, all but one in the comic lead of the play that is perhaps the most famous of North Carolina's outdoor dramas. Her acting career has included many performances with the PlayMakers Repertory Company, the Charlotte Repertory Theatre, the Tanglewood Barn Theatre in Winston-Salem, and the Theatre in the Square in the Atlanta area, where she was Actress of the Year in 1988-89. Her one-person show Tamsen Donner toured the United States for two years and was performed on regional public television. She performed in one play and produced four others in a project called Window to the World, a television series designed for use in secondary schools. The program has been presented in thirty-two states. She has performed in numerous other television and radio productions. In 1992, the North Carolina Theatre Conference recognized her and her husband Bill with the Marian Smith Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Theatre and last year it named her North Carolina Distinguished Woman of the Year in the Arts.

Besides teacher and actress, Martha Nell Hardy has been an able organizer and administrator. She was founder of the Carolina Regional Theatre, now the North Carolina Theatre, and served as Executive Director for five years and Artistic Director for six more years. The adult and children's touring shows of the Carolina Regional Theatre reached into ninety-seven counties of North Carolina under her guidance. She has produced, directed, and served as consultant for numerous productions throughout the 1970s and 1980s. She was Chair of the Department of Speech Communication from 1983 to 1988.

Her versatile talent, remarkable energy, and devotion to her students and colleagues at this University single out Martha Nell Hardy for this Distinguished Alumna Award.

ARTHUR STANLEY LINK

The last of the sixty-nine volumes of The Papers of Woodrow Wilson was published this year under the guidance of Arthur Link, Director and Editor. Of this monumental achievement, the historian Dewey W. Grantham has written, "Indeed, The Papers of Woodrow Wilson may well be the best edited, the most successful, and the most critically acclaimed of all the American documentary series that took shape in the years after World War II." Another historian has added, "No series could have been edited with more care and thoroughness than Link and his colleagues have displayed over the years." Professor Link has also completed five volumes of a projected eight-volume biography of the twenty-eighth President -- two of which have been awarded the prestigious Bancroft Prize for the best historical studies in 1956 and 1960. These volumes crown a publications record of some thirty books and more than a hundred articles, most of them on aspects of Wilson's personality and career. In 1989 Professor Link received the first Award for Distinguished Service in Documentary Preservation and Publication from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.

A native of Virginia, he and his family moved to Mount Pleasant in Cabarrus County when he was six years old. In 1937 he enrolled at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill where he would remain as a student until receiving his Ph.D. in history in 1945. As an undergraduate he was a typist at the Campus Y (then YMCA), a nighttime custodian in Swain Hall, a chauffeur for an English professor, and a tutor at fifty cents an hour. He also sang baritone in the Glee Club and became an energetic debater in the Dialectic Society. The future director of his dissertation, Fletcher Green, later remembered observing the young student "since he first attracted my attention in his Sophomore year by his almost photographic memory, his wide reading and general knowledge, his clear-cut and incisive questions and analyses, his ability to select the salient and significant facts, and by his intellectual curiosity." He graduated Phi Beta Kappa and "with highest honors" upon completing his honors essay, "A History of Buildings at the University of North Carolina." As a graduate student he was Research Assistant for the eminent sociologist Rupert Vance, and during these years he began his life-long fascination with the figure of Woodrow Wilson, who would figure prominently in both his thesis and dissertation.

In 1945 Professor Link took a teaching position at Princeton University where he remained for four years before joining the faculty at Northwestern University. He returned to Princeton in 1960 and became Edwards Professor of American History in 1965 and George Henry Davis '86 Professor of American History there in 1976. Upon his retirement from Princeton, he returned to North Carolina and is today Distinguished Adjunct Professor of History at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and Lecturer in the History of Medicine at the Bowman Gray School of Medicine, Wake Forest University. He is presently writing a monograph on the first fifty years of American neurology. He received an honorary degree from this University in 1962 and has been recognized with honorary degrees from Bucknell University, Washington and Lee University, Northwestern University, and other institutions. Last spring he was awarded the American Philosophical Society's Jefferson Medal for "distinguished achievement in the humanities, arts, or social sciences."

For his eminent career as one of the handful of most distinguished historians of his generation, the University, having given that career its birth, proudly calls Arthur Stanley Link back today to honor him with this Distinguished Alumnus Award.

MARY POPE OSBORNE

Describing her life as a student at this University, Mary Pope Osborne has written, "I went on to study drama at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. In my junior year, I discovered an even greater realm of adventure and changing scenery: the world of mythology and comparative religion. So I became a religion major and learned as much as I could about other cultures." Graduating in 1971 and nurtured with those years of liberal study, she has gone on to write more than twenty-five books for young readers, including novels, mysteries, tall tales, and American biographies. Of her Beauty and the Beast, for example, Newsweek has foreseen it as "destined to become a household classic," while the London Times has said of her first young-adult novel, Run, Run, As Fast As You Can, "The style is crisp with not a wasted word, and the characters are so vivid they leap out of the paper like pop-ups, all clearly defined individuals. . . , a truly remarkable first novel." Other works for young readers have been honored by awards such as School Library Journal Best Book of the Year (1991), Parents Magazine Best Book of the Year (1991), a Book-of-the-Month Club selection (1988), and selection three times for the American Bookseller Pick of the List.

The range of Mary Pope Osborne's writing is surely heightened by her extensive travels throughout Asia following her graduation from this campus. Later she worked as a window dresser, medical assistant, Russian travel consultant, teacher of acting classes in a nursing home, bartender, and assistant editor of a children's magazine.

Her play, The Family Animal, was performed last year by the Circle Repertory Theater in New York City. Today, as President of The Authors Guild, she helps to guide over 6000 published authors in their rights to freedom of expression and to fair contracts and equitable tax laws.

Of her work as a writer, she has said, "I think you're having too much fun here. Time to get serious and get a real job." For a job truly honorable, performed with originality, versatility, and artistry, the University calls Mary Pope Osborne back in mid-career to confer this Distinguished Alumna Award.

MELVIN LUTHER WATT

Melvin Watt is completing his first term in the United States House of Representatives as Congressman from the state's Twelfth Congressional District. From the beginning, his voting record set an independent course of action, prompting Professor Ted Arrington at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte to call him "a very original thinker. He doesn't just go down the line and follow what everyone else is saying." He serves on the Judiciary Committee; the Banking, Finance, and Urban Affairs Committee; and the Post Office and Civil Services Committee.

Graduating from this University in 1967, he earned a Phi Beta Kappa key and was named president of the business honors fraternity in the School of Business Administration as a result of achieving the highest academic average in the School. He is a graduate of the Yale University School of Law. An attorney and businessman in Charlotte, he went on to serve one term (1985-86) in the North Carolina Senate.

Elected to the House of Representatives in 1992, he was one of two African-American members of Congress from North Carolina, both the first of their race elected in this century in North Carolina. In 1966, Martin Luther King wrote: "There is no easy way to create a world where men and women can live together, where each has his own job and house and where all children receive as much education as their minds can absorb. But if such a world is created in our lifetime, it will be done in the United States by Negroes and white people of good will." As a leader of demonstrated good will throughout a career of unstinting public service -- at the local, state, and national levels -- this University proudly singles out Melvin L. Watt with the special recognition of this Distinguished Alumnus Award.