

## **Snethen Philip Harris, Jr.**

Phil Harris is one of those slow-talking, relaxed Carolina gentlemen whose courtly manner brings to mind magnolias and afternoons on the veranda. But underneath Phil's down-home Southern style is a man with strong passions and an ability to get things done. A major passion has been the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. And his ability focused here has influenced most facets of this campus.

A native of Vance County, Phil's college career began in Chapel Hill at age 29. In two years, he earned his degree in business administration with Phi Beta Kappa honors. At the same time he worked as a tutor, lab instructor, and on a research project for General Motors. From these student experiences, Phil developed his passion for education—getting it, strengthening it, and ensuring that it could be passed on to others.

Phil has given his talents to the cause of education at Chapel Hill throughout his career as a partner in the New York accounting firm Peat, Marwick, Mitchell & Company and during his efforts to retire to Henderson which began in 1982 and continue to this day.

The years since Phil's student days have been consistently punctuated with alumni service. He is a member of the Chancellor's Club and a director of the Educational Foundation. He is on the Business School Board of Visitors and has served as vice-chairman of the University's National Development Council. A fund raising drive led by him established an endowed professorship in the School of Business.

And he's held about all the offices for the General Alumni Association—treasurer, member of the Board of Directors, and in 1985, he was installed GAA president.

Phil Harris has a philosophy about the campus that has guided his participation here. "I do not believe in sacred cows at Chapel Hill," Phil says. "The University must be viewed as the sum of its parts—the alumni, the administration and faculty, the students, and the various schools and departments. Differing areas and interests must work for the common good."

Phil's colleagues on the GAA Executive Committee note his refreshing perspective on the University and the potential benefit of alumni involvement. All observed him give unselfishly of his time, and his remarkable way of pulling people together. They witnessed his fierce determination and sense of duty as he tackled the GAA's finances, served as acting Director of Development while helping to identify and recruit an outstanding new Vice Chancellor for Development, led the GAA as President, and directed plans for the new Alumni Center.

One colleague recalls that while serving as Director of Development, Phil prepared paper weights with the following inscription: "It's amazing what people can accomplish if they have no concern about who receives the credit."

It was during this time that Phil succeeded in bringing the University's development arm into the recent Arts and Sciences campaign. Chancellor Christopher C. Fordham III says of that effort, "Phil's contributions to this effort exemplified his genius for bringing people together and his devotion to the University in all of its aspects"

That is Phil Harris's philosophy of how things should work at Chapel Hill. And, thanks in large part to Phil, from the Alumni House to South Building to the business school to the Smith Center, that's usually how it is.