

## J. Allen Adams '52

How does an abiding and active love for the University get started? How is it nurtured? Al Adams thinks he knows.

Al's mother had a freshman orientation booklet that contained the words to the cheers and songs. She would take him to a barber shop in Norfolk, where all the barbers were from North Carolina, and have him perform the fight song.

As Al was finishing high school, she took him to an alumni event at Nags Head, where he met Frank Porter Graham '09. "So little Allen is going to the University next year?" Graham said. "You'd better keep him home one more year," he added, considering that Al was only 16. "That," Al said, "is the only bad thing she ever did to me."

And it's one of the few times anyone ever slowed him down. Al didn't rise high enough on the football team to dress for the games; but he liked being on the "meatball" squad. As Al saw it, he got to play more than the first stringers, because he had to perform the role of each opponent's offense *and* defense every day in practice. He zipped through the three-year undergraduate program designed for war veterans, and at 19, Al was ready to enter the law school.

By the time he got to the North Carolina General Assembly in 1975, Al had developed an understanding of the importance of low, state-subsidized tuition, and the vital role of research in making our University an economic development engine for our largely rural state.

He became best known for craftiness in the halls and the backrooms of the lawmakers. There never has been a more effective friend of Carolina in Raleigh. An urban liberal in a legislature usually dominated by rural conservatives, Al makes it his business to change the negative attitude that constantly questions "subsidy to education." Al tells all who will listen and even a few who don't want to listen that all North Carolinians have a stake in competitive faculty salaries and tuition help for graduate assistance. One of Al's proudest accomplishments is convincing the conservative N.C. Citizens for Business and Industry to annually affirm its endorsement of support to the research universities.

Of Al's effectiveness in the General Assembly, former UNC System lobbyist Dr. Jay Robinson MEDUC '57 says the following: "On several occasions, Al has been known to take up Carolina's cause with people who made no bones about not being supportive of our great University as we felt they needed to be. Much to their surprise, after Al finished talking to them; they suddenly had a greater understanding of what our University means to the state of North Carolina.

While garnering this support for the University, Al managed never to alienate those people whose help and support we needed. He has always been an extremely wise, non-threatening, and congenial person with whom people always feel comfortable.

He has even been known to talk some State fans into liking UNC — just a little bit!

Our University proudly has many friends, but we should all feel fortunate that we are the beneficiaries of some of the best lobbying efforts seen in the state of North Carolina — we have all benefited from the gallant efforts of Al Adams."

Al has said "I think my interest and love for the University comes from my political activity, and the integral role this university has in the state. It has been a happy marriage." He brought the same passion to the Board of Visitors and to the General Alumni Association — both of which he has led as chairman.

Tuition remissions for graduate students, legislation scheduling the return of all overhead receipts to our campus, flexibility legislation, and much needed funds for salaries and facilities — quietly, but effectively Al Adams has deftly shaped and guided these important initiatives.

One of the crowning achievements of Al's legislative work on Carolina's behalf came in 1995 — 11 years after his retirement from the General Assembly. With University funding under one of its most severe attacks ever in Raleigh, he helped gather a sales team that included William Friday '48, business champion Hugh McColl '57, and Republican Governors Jim

reason that he serves on the board of the Institute for the Arts and Humanities which raises funds for fellowships to keep younger professors who are committed to Carolina but are continually recruited by private schools.

"When you help young professors," Tom says, "you build the reputation and the future of the University."

He calls his father the greatest of the Kenan philanthropists, for his work with the business school that now extends to the Kenan Institute of Private Enterprise, and to a separate institute halfway around the world in Southeast Asia. Still, Tom is attentive to the entire legacy.

William Rand Kenan Jr. helped set the tone for the prestigious rise of the Chemistry Department when he assisted in the discovery of calcium carbide. Tom has undertaken establishment of an Institute for Chemistry in William Rand Kenan's name. "We will create one of the finest chemistry institutes in the country," he says. As for the arts, he says, "I'd really like to have a first-class performing arts center on campus. *We should* have one."

Almost certainly, we shall. Science, business, art — and the loving care to keep it all humbly beneath the green treetops. As the new stadium field house takes the name of Frank Kenan, younger cousin of the original builder, Frank's son, too, carries a great name forward with distinction.