Managing with Love by Marguerite Hays
Dale Davis helps to shape the careers of her show business clients in their best interests.

Setting the Stage for Ideas by Terry Walters
Founder of Stages Repertory Theatre in Houston, Texas, Ted Swindley has received national recognition for his creative work.

The Jovial Producer by Marguerite Hays
As a Broadway producer, Karl Allison works with such celebrated actors as Claudette Colbert, Rex Harrison, Jason Robards and Colleen Dewhurst.

A Class Act by Jim Stewart
Unlike commercial theatres, the Furman Theatre Guild can afford to present some plays that may not be box office hits.

The King of Clubs by Vince Moore
Although it took Betsy King six years to claim her first LPGA victory, she has won more tournaments than any other golfer since then.
MANAGING WITH LOVE

BY MARGUERITE HAYS

In a business where rejection is an everyday occurrence, Dale Davis sustains her clients with advice and affection.

On CBS's "Morning Show" last August, co-host Mariette Hartley interviewed actress Dixie Carter, one of the stars of the hit TV series "Designing Women." Hartley commented that it must have been very hard for Carter to get back into acting, after taking eight years off to start a family.

It was hard, Carter said. When she decided to go back to work, she could not find an agent because she had not worked for so long. "One person—only one person—her name is Dale Davis and she had faith in me."

"So at 35 you felt archaic?" asked Hartley.

"Well, I didn't exactly because, as I said, I met this fantastic woman who thought I was good and got me back in the business...."

Dixie Carter is one of a group of actors whose lives have been changed by Dale Davis. A 1963 Furman graduate, Davis manages the professional lives of 24 actors, writers and directors. The actors she represents perform on and off-Broadway, in regional, repertory and stock theatre, in movies and television. The writers are mostly playwrights, who write for stage and television, and some also work as actors and directors. The only full-time director she represents, Thomas Gruenewald, has directed hundreds of plays, as well as a dozen operas.

Davis's office is located only three blocks from her apartment, on the 10th floor of a building in the heart of the theatre district. Like her apartment, her two-room office is spacious perhaps only by New York standards. Her assistant's desk, file cabinets and shelves loaded with scripts and videotapes occupy the room opening off the hallway, while Davis's desk, several chairs and a small refrigerator fill the second room. Behind her desk a large window looks out over Broadway and 51st Street.

Scarcely more than five feet tall, Davis generally wears loose-fitting dresses and low-heeled shoes that are suitable for walking long distances on the crowded streets of Manhattan. She wears her honey-colored hair in a longish pageboy bob, with bangs over her forehead. As she talks, her face is animated. She rolls her eyes for emphasis and punctuates her sentences with bursts of laughter.

From the moment you walk into her office, you know that her clients are members of a "family." One wall is covered with photographs of them, arranged around a picture of Davis as a little girl. The other walls are decorated with framed posters of shows her clients have starred in.

"Dale exists for us," says Gene Lindsey, who acted regularly in soap operas for several years and has performed in a number of shows on and off-Broadway. "She does everything from babysit to let us change clothes in her office. It's the perfect business for her. She loves doing it, and our relationship is wonderful. The whole package that goes with it—Dale, her mother, her friends and relatives—are wonderful."

The letterhead of her stationery says, "Dale Davis and Company—Personal Management," and that is what she provides for her clients. The difference between theatrical agents and managers lies mainly in the "personal" nature of their work in Manhattan, Davis welcomes a constant stream of out-of-town friends to her mid-town apartment.
managers' services. Agents are franchised by the unions to find jobs for actors, writers and directors, while there is no legal definition of a manager. Agents generally represent many more people than do managers. Small agencies may have 50 to 75 clients, while large agencies, such as William Morris and ICM, may represent more than 700 clients.

"Managers are career builders. Agents are job-getters, although some people jump over the border lines," explains Harris Spylios, Davis's former partner, who has also owned an agency. "When a client is offered a job, a manager must be concerned with where the job will place his or her client two years from now. Agents tend to get the biggest deal in the shortest possible time."

Some of Davis's clients, like many people in the theatre, have both agents and managers. For these clients, Davis works with their agents and provides the personal services that agents are not equipped to provide.

Jeffrey De Munn, who played opposite Jessica Lange in the movie Frances and was nominated for a Tony Award for his role in K2, is represented by both Davis and William Morris. "Dale represents me in a much more personal way," he says. "She takes my private life into consideration. No matter where I am, we talk almost every day. She let's me know what's going on and gives me a progress report."

When asked what specifically she does for her clients, Davis says, "I keep avoiding that question because it is such a difficult one. If anything makes me worth the extra money they pay me it is that my services are so tailor-made for each client. They are all such completely unique individuals that I do different things for different people."

"On the bread, meat and potatoes level, there are jobs to be had in stage, television and motion pictures. My job is to try to find out about as many of those jobs as I can and to provide a doorway for them to get a crack at the job."

To keep abreast of all of the productions that are being planned in New York, Los Angeles and throughout the country, Davis stays in constant touch with producers, directors, casting directors and agents. When she hears of a show that has possibilities for a client, she gets a copy of the script and reads it and gives it to her client. If they agree that the show has merit and that a particular part would be right for the client, she arranges an audition. "I try to set up a situation so they will be treated with dignity and respect," she says.

After the audition, she calls the casting director to find out what happened. If the actor did not get the part, she tries to find out why. Then she relays this information to her client in the most positive way possible.

"If it's just a bad situation, I never lie to my clients. They're too good, too professional for me to lie to them. But I try to protect them from the ugly part of the business. I try to put myself between them and the producers and directors to make it easier for them to be artists."

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**Davis provides the personal services for her clients that agents cannot provide.**

When her clients are in the process of creating a role or a play, they often ask for her artistic advice. When an actor is getting ready to open in a show on or off-Broadway, she will almost always be asked to attend a dress rehearsal and express her opinion of the production. She also attends as many out-of-town performances by her clients as she can, which this past year has taken her to Washington, Boston, New Haven, Philadelphia, Rochester, Atlanta and Los Angeles.

To make life easier for her clients, she makes their appointments and keeps their schedules, often including dentist and doctor appointments. She handles their finances to the extent that she receives the payments for their work, pays their agents and takes out her own commission, then sends the remainder to her clients. For her services she receives a percentage of her clients' income generated from their work; if they don't work, she doesn't get paid. With clients who have agents, she gets 10 percent. With clients who do not have agents, she gets 15 percent.

Many of Davis's clients have been with her since she started her own company in 1976. In a business where people change representatives like they change clothes, this is a remarkable record. Because of the close relationship between Davis and her clients, she never felt the need for a contract to legalize the relationship until just two years ago. A few unpleasant incidents convinced her and her clients that there should be something in writing to protect her interests. Now clients sign a simple one-and-a-half page contract that briefly describes her services and the terms for her payment.

When Davis thinks about her career, she seems surprised at the turn her life has taken. "I always meant to teach English," she explains. "I have loved literature since I learned to read... since my grandmother used to read to me."

Davis grew up in Greenville and Decatur, Ga. She entered Furman in 1957, but was forced to drop out during her sophomore year due to the illness of her father. At that time she began a series of jobs that would bring her into contact with a great many people, many of whom remain her friends.

She worked first as head of the electrocardiogram basal metabolism department at Greenville General Hospital and then at Leslie Advertising Agency. She worked in Washington for a year as secretary to a congressman from California and then returned to Greenville where she went to work for the South Carolina Employment Office.

Realizing she wanted to finish her education and prepare to teach, she applied for loans and scholarships and re-entered Furman in 1961. To help pay her expenses she worked for a number of departments at Furman, including art, English, education and modern foreign languages. Describing her duties in these departments, she jokes, "I sang a little, danced a little, took a little shorthand."

As an English major, she was most influenced by Mrs. Meta Gilpatrick, whose modern drama course she remembers particularly, and by Dr. John Crabtree and Dr. James Stewart. In their courses she learned to love the theatre from the written word. Crabtree, Stewart and art department chairman Tom Flowers remain her close friends, and Crabtree and Flowers have visited her in New York.

After graduating in 1963, she taught English and directed plays at high schools in Greenville and in Chapel Hill, N.C. But even with four years' experience, her salary remained less than $5,000, so she began to look for another job. She visited New York and decided to move there because she thought "any civilized person should spend one year in New York." She returned to Greenville, sold her car and most of her possessions, and arrived back in New York without a job or a place to stay.

Photographs of clients cover one wall of Davis's office, where she and her assistant, Ann Gaulder, go over the day's schedule.
She lived in the Paris Hotel until she found an apartment on 74th Street, where she would live for the next four years. She worked for a detective agency and a fund-raising firm before registering with several teacher agencies. While substitute teaching two weeks at St. Hilda’s and St. Hugh’s School on Manhattan, she met Michael Thomas, a theatrical agent, who offered her a job. The week after she finished teaching, she started work for him.

"I went to work for him filing pictures and answering the telephone. For less than $100 a week. I'm the only person I know who every year of her life has become slightly more qualified, more educated, and has insisted that her salary be reduced on a regular basis," Davis says laughing. "The more experience I get and the better I get, the less I feel I should be paid for it."

Ironically, a week later the Mother Superior at St. Hilda's and St. Hugh's called and asked her to come back as a substitute for the rest of the year and offered her a contract for the following year. Although this was exactly the kind of teaching position Davis had been looking for, she decided that she would always wonder what would have happened in her life if she did not give her "show-biz" job a chance. Eventually she became a sub-agent under Michael Thomas, franchised by the actors unions, to represent clients.

After two and a half years, in 1971, Davis decided to leave the agency and return to Greenville. The previous year had been difficult: her father had died, and her apartment had been robbed twice. Also, she had become bored with her work. "As corny as it sounds," she says, "I need to feel that what I do matters to somebody else. I felt I was mainly casting soap commercials and that didn't feel very rewarding to me, so I left."

In Greenville she worked at WFBC television station and at Henderson Advertising Agency and started applying to graduate schools. In the fall of 1972 she entered the University of Tennessee on a teaching fellowship to study for a master's degree in English.

Although she was nervous about returning to school, she had a very good year, and many of the people she met that year are still close friends.

She intended to stay in school until she earned her degree, but in 1973, a day after summer school had started, she received a telephone call from Michael Thomas. He asked her to return to New York for three weeks and run his business while he was in Europe. He said she could live in his apartment and he would pay her a lump sum that would help with graduate school expenses. She agreed and left for New York the next day, intending to come back in a few weeks.

"It's been a very long three weeks," says Davis, sitting in her office. "When I got back up here, all those things happened that Michael thought would happen. Everybody said, 'Oh, it's never been the same since you left,' and I realized that New York was so much more a part of my life than I had known. I still might have escaped but the day Michael got back from Europe, his mother had a heart attack in Georgia, and he left again."

She stayed the rest of the summer. "By that time I realized that this is what I'm supposed to do," she says.

She worked for Thomas three more years, until she became dissatisfied once again. The problem, she realized, was that as an agent she was forced to represent too many people. "I decided the only way I could stay interested in this business on a lifelong basis was to take a very small number of people whom I could believe in on the best days and the worst days of their professional and personal lives and really commit myself to their careers, to the artists that I believed they were."

She found a group of people who were willing to take a chance with her, and on October 25, 1976, she started Dale Davis and Company. Most of her clients had been her clients for several years at Michael Thomas. As their manager rather than their agent, she could devote much more time to their interests.

"I try never to represent more people than I can give 100 percent of my time to," she says. "I just hope they don't all need it at once."

Davis usually arrives in her office about 10 a.m. She goes over her mail with her assistant and then starts making calls. Some days she spends as much as three-fourths of her time on the telephone, talking with clients, producers, agents and casting directors. At least one or two clients come in every day, sometimes just to talk or to eat a quick lunch with a soft drink from her refrigerator. Since she usually talks with her contacts on the West Coast in late afternoon, she never leaves the office before 6 p.m.

In the evening, Davis frequently has dinner with clients or business people who are talking about plays. Some nights she attends screenings, plays or play readings. When she gets home, she often reads scripts.

"There's a lot of political partying and socializing in this business," says Harris Spylios. "Dale is good at this. She's good at having lunches and dinners with directors, producers, writers and casting directors. But it's never relaxing. You're always working for your clients and their future jobs. You have to be available to your clients and other people 24 hours a day."

According to Spylios, Dale has an excellent reputation. She is known for her honesty, integrity and good taste in clients. "When people want real actors, they call Dale Davis and Company," he says. "They know even when negotiation gets rough, they will get an honest deal."

Although Davis's reputation and experience are important to her clients, even more important is her emotional support. For them, she is advisor, promoter and friend.

"I have been in New York almost 28 years," says Elizabeth Franz, who is now starring as Kate Jerome in Neil Simon's Broadway Bound. "When I was young, I saw many agents, but I never saw any appreciation of talent. Agents were just interested in types. Dale was always interested in talent and the humanity of the person, and not in the commercial value."

When clients are trying to decide which job to try for or which job to take, she discusses the advantages and disadvantages with them. "I try to listen to them and see where they are in their lives and careers and help decide if it's worth the risk of going for an audition. If more than one job is offered, should they take the one that pays the most money or the one that is closest to their heart?"

In a business where rejection is an everyday occurrence, Davis's exuberance and belief in her clients helps them through hard times. "There are times when we go through disappointments," says Franz. "Maybe you try out for a part but someone who has had more television experience gets it. You get so discouraged. Dale sits down with you and tells you how far you've come professionally, how close you are to that one thing that will make the difference. She makes you have a little..."
more hope. She gets you strong again so you can go on to the next audition."

"This is not a very kind business," says Gene Lindsey. "Dale helps to keep the tigers away. She can pick you up off the floor and keep you going. Dale is a nurturer in a business where there is no nurturing. She's got a heart big enough for everyone."

For Davis and most of her clients, this is a good year. Elizabeth Franz is starring on Broadway. Jeffrey De Munn, who just finished filming the CBS miniseries "Windmills of the Gods," is currently working in Costa Gravas' feature film Sundown and is filming "Pigeon Feathers" for PBS. Ann-Sara Matthews is a recurring character on the new TV series "The Clinic," and she is in rehearsal for an off-Broadway show. Kaulani Lee has just completed filming "Phoebe" for television. Dennis Bailey has just finished filming his second appearance on "Dallas" in California.

Peter Davies is one of the leading characters on the ABC soap opera "Loving." Monica Moran and David Toney are in rehearsal for the One Act Play Festival off-Broadway. John Bowman's new one-act play was presented off-Broadway. Richard

Behind Davis's desk a large window looks out over Broadway and 51st Street.

Thomsen is touring with a production of I Never Sang for My Father. Thomas Gruenewald is directing You Can't Take It With You at the Pioneer Theatre in Salt Lake City, and his production of Lady Be Good is moving from the Goodspeed Opera House to the Kennedy Center. Edward Marshall is assistant director of the Broadway show Romance, Romance. Larry Atlas has written a new play, and a play by John Pi Roman has been optioned in New York. Jon De Vries filmed the mini-series Lincoln last fall.

As Dale Davis and Company enters its twelfth year, its future seems bright, but this has not always been true. In 1978, two years after she started her own business, Davis became seriously ill with a rare disease diagnosed as a pseudo brain tumor. Hospitalized several times that year, Davis continued to work, often by telephone, and her young partner Harris Spylios kept the business going. The cortisone she took during her illness aggravated a weight problem, and even after she recovered, she continued to gain weight. This, in turn, caused other health problems.

After a friend died suddenly of a heart attack in the spring of 1986, she decided she must do something about her own health. She entered a weight-reduction program of supplemented fasting administered by Beth Israel Hospital, where she went each week for checkups and counseling.

She joined a swim club a few blocks from her apartment and began swimming three mornings a week. In 29 weeks she lost more than 100 pounds.

For Davis, this experience has meant much more than just losing weight. It has totally changed her lifestyle and her outlook. For one thing, she says, she has learned that "eating is not a mystical experience. It's just a matter of counting calories and continuing to exercise."

Now that she feels so much better, she can concentrate all of her energy on the people who depend on her: her family, friends and clients. She is devoted to her mother, Eleanor, who lives in Greenville, and to her brother's family, especially her nephew, Ted Davis, Jr., who attends Furman.

Davis has so many longtime friends for the same reason she has so many longtime clients: she loves people. She is genuinely interested in the lives and concerns of others and incredibly generous with her time and worldly possessions. Her warmth and enthusiasm make people feel better about the world and better about themselves. Her quick mind, sense of humor and considerable talent as a raconteur make them laugh a lot.

Working for her clients provides the satisfaction she has always sought. "The reason I continue to be interested in what I'm doing is that I have found a group of people who have a very special gift. If they are allowed to continue to grow as artists and to have an arena for their artistry, the world will be a richer place. If I can in any way act as a buffer and make their creative process more likely to happen, then I feel that what I do matters."

What she does seems to matter very much to her clients. Gene Lindsey says simply, "I would not be in this business, if it were not for Dale. She makes it possible to keep some modicum of self respect."

"She is certainly the most important influence on my life," says Jeffrey De Munn.

Elizabeth Franz says it most eloquently: "Dale means the world to me. She has kept me alive. It's extraordinary. She represents me and what my heart says."
No one was more surprised than Ted Swindley himself when Esquire magazine named him to its 1986 register of outstanding American men and women under 40. He says to this day he still doesn't know how it happened. But when you consider what Swindley has achieved in just 14 years since graduating from Furman, he seems an obvious choice.

Esquire's list of outstanding young Americans was published in the December 1986 issue. In notifying Swindley of his selection, editor Lee Eisenberg wrote, "From among the 5,000 candidates considered this year, the Esquire editors, with the help of a distinguished panel of advisors, selected 72 individuals to be honored... As one among them, you stand for what is best of a generation, and it is our hope that those who read about your accomplishments will be inspired to pursue their own vision."

Swindley was one of 20 people honored in the arts, in recognition of his having founded Stages Repertory Theatre in Houston, Texas. The theatre, which he founded in 1978 on less than $8,000, is now a major arts institution, the second largest theatre in the fourth largest city in America. It has two handsome theatres (each seating 250), a staff of 25 and an acting company of 40, including four equity players and six other full-time actors. Stages' annual budget now runs over $940 thousand.

But it is not the size of Stages so much as the creativity of its artistic director that has drawn national—even international—attention. Swindley's purpose from the start has been to produce controversial, thought-provoking plays. He seeks out foreign plays and new plays, works by Texas playwrights and women playwrights. The Houston Chronicle wrote of his theatre, "Stages has courageously earned its new and rightful position in the city as the best at...contemporary theatre that is daring, scathing, astonishing and hilariously unpretentious."

Swindley described his artistic vision in Esquire: "I love watching the audience grow not only in numbers but in sophistication as well. I did a couple of what we call safe plays, and I got this wonderful letter from a subscriber saying, 'I'm getting nervous now. You're on the wrong track.' I think everybody in my profession has the same mentality as an evangelist, a politician. I want as many people on this journey with me as I can put on the boat."

In choosing plays, Swindley begins with the issues, with the question "What do I want to talk to the audience about next year?" The answer for the current season includes the black experience in America (a scathing social satire, The Colored Museum by George C. Wolfe), Russian-American relations, especially the political paranoia found in both countries (The Highest Standard of Living by Keith Reddin), and race relations in South Africa (The Blood Knot by Athol Fugard). Stages' international festival will feature its first bilingual production, with different casts performing Kiss of the Spider Woman in Spanish one night, English the next. The Women Playwrights' project will have Joan Tewkesbury, who wrote the film Nashville, directing her avant-garde...
western Cowboy Jack Street. And Stages will do the world premiere of the Jules Pfeiffer play that became the hit movie *Carnal Knowledge*, directed by Swindley.

Besides such contemporary, innovative and often controversial plays, Stages also offers a full year of children's theatre, which Swindley calls his investment in the future. Here, too, he strives for top quality plays and good literature, works that can be enjoyed by parents and children alike.

Because Swindley's goal is to challenge his audiences, he is not afraid to take chances. He says, "I have been criticized for not serving a large number of people. But I think it is better to serve an important audience than to have big crowds, and we tend to draw people in decision-making capacities. Take the Czech play we did last year, *The Memorandum* by Vojtech Havel. If a corporate executive saw the play, in which communism is depicted in an office setting, he might have recognized what is dehumanizing in the situation and just possibly have made the quality of life of his employees better. Art should deal with quality of life, with humanizing influences."

How did Swindley arrive at such an important place in the arts so quickly? He says, looking back, that he made all the right choices. First, he decided to attend Furman. He had visited the campus as a high school junior from Columbia, S.C., participating in a statewide Thespians meeting. Theatre, then, led him to Furman, but once enrolled he chose to major in political science, rather than drama. That, too, he considers a good choice in terms of his career, because political and philosophical issues underlie most of the drama he produces.

"It is horrifying that it costs $5 million to mount a new show on Broadway—I could do a whole season for that."

Ted Swindley

But, while Swindley did not major in drama at Furman, he was very much involved in the drama program, primarily as an actor. He says, "I learned a lot from the theatre department, a sense of professionalism from day one. I learned about hard work and striving for quality in whatever endeavor you are in." The directing bug took hold of him, he says, when a number he directed for the Furman Follies received a standing ovation. Another formative choice he made was to participate in Furman's fall term in Vienna program. He says, "That was probably the best thing that happened to me as an undergraduate."

Stages Repertory Theatre's new home is a former engraving company that has been transformed into two jewel-box theatres.

After graduating from Furman, Swindley studied for two master's degrees. With a fellowship in drama and speech, he obtained a master of arts degree from Baylor; next he took an M.F.A. from the University of Houston. Especially significant during that program was a semester-long apprenticeship at the world-famous Guthrie Theatre in Minneapolis.

Swindley says, "I decided to go for the best." At the Guthrie he learned about literary management, how to plan an artistic season.

Back in Houston with two advanced degrees and convinced he wanted to direct, Swindley decided the only way to be sure of that career was to have his own theatre. To make a living, he took a job in marketing and public relations with the Houston Grand Opera, one of the largest opera companies in the nation. That job added experience in both the business and artistic sides of the theatre which has paid off handsomely at Stages.

In 1978, he launched his company—on a shoestring—in the basement of an old brewery in downtown Houston. The first few seasons were a struggle, what Swindley calls his "character-building period." Occasionally there were even plumbing leaks from the restaurant upstairs onto the heads of his audience. But within a few years,
Swindley's vision of a regional repertory theatre dedicated to innovative productions began to turn into reality. It succeeded so well, in fact, that the fire marshall threatened to close the theatre—Stages was drawing too many people!

Once again, Swindley was fortunate. A developer interested in turning a 1920s art deco engraving company building into a commercial property offered to start his venture by building two theatres for the company. Since moving into its attractive, enlarged facilities in 1985, Stages has continued to grow, drawing wider audiences and increasing critical acclaim. Its current goal is to become a full-time professional theatre, and it is well on its way.

Recently, both the Houston and Texas arts commissions have designated Stages a major arts institution. This next season it officially becomes an equity theatre, a member of the important League of Resident Theatres.

With Stages so well established, Swindley is entering a new phase of his career. He will continue as artistic director, but expand his interests. He says, "In the formative years you have to be myopic, but now it is important for me to get out and do other, broadening things." Last summer, for instance, he and a number of other American regional theatre directors spent several weeks in West Germany studying that nation's contemporary theatre, as guests of the government.

Like most theatre people, Swindley would like to take a show to New York. He says he would like to achieve that goal in the next three years. With his track record, you have to expect him to succeed. He also plans to act occasionally, because he says it is important for a director not to forget the "other side."

Still, directing remains his primary calling. Swindley explains: "Directing is a totally different aesthetic. You work with the whole picture, make big aesthetic choices."

Swindley gives his broad liberal arts education much credit for making him an effective director. He says, "It's essential to get the big picture. You need to translate the world of a play with all its political, social and historical implications. I am astonished at other directors who know the craft of directing but have no understanding of philosophy, history, foreign languages, art. You have to understand the philosophical underpinnings of a play before you can create a work of art."

He goes to unusual lengths to provide the broad picture. For instance, before work began on the play about Czech dissidents, he and his actors spent a week doing seminars on communism and on what dissidents go through.

Given his dynamic vision of the theatre, Swindley finds trends on Broadway frightening. "We tend to think Broadway reflects the place of theatre in this country, but because of the terrific expenses involved they tend to produce musicals. And to spend millions to achieve spectacle, which Aristotle pointed out is the lowest form of art, instead of spending money on new works and new voices. It is horrifying that it costs $5 million to mount a new show on Broadway—I could do whole seasons for that!"

One result of the problems encountered in staging plays on Broadway, Swindley explains, is that regional theatre has become the place where discovery is going on, where the art of drama is being nourished. He says, "Smaller regional companies on our scale have less economic risk to premiere new plays." Swindley, who has discovered and premiered a number of plays, adds, "It is very gratifying when a play is published and you read 'originally produced at Stages Repertory Theatre, Houston.' You feel that you are giving something back to the culture."

The article in Esquire represented yet more affirmation for Swindley. He says, "In the arts you sometimes wonder if you are really making an impact. And then out of the blue, you receive this affirmation. It's rather humbling, inspiring. But I do feel good about what I have done so far. I struck off on my own path and stayed to it. It has meant hard work, lots. But it has been very satisfying."

Rewarding as the recent acclaim has been for the young director, it is by no means what he most enjoys. That is still the process of creating exciting theatre. As he tells his actors, "Applause is important, but it must never be most important. You must enjoy the process. That's really the payoff more than the product. You need to love the work."

Ardencie Hall performs in the Stages production of the tribal rock musical Hair, which Swindley directed.
Karl Allison always seems about to rush out the door. Or answer the other telephone. Or fly to London or California.

As a producer of plays, and more recently films, he has not a moment to spare. His work compels him to attend endless meetings, return countless telephone calls and make hundreds of decisions that could determine the success or failure of his current projects.

Yet when you finally catch up with him, he seems quite jovial and eager to talk. A distinguished-looking man with reddish hair and gray-streaked beard, he smiles and laughs a lot. As befits his fast-paced business, he speaks rapidly — of the shows he has produced, the projects he is now considering, the actors he has worked with. He gives you the distinct impression that he finds his work exhilarating.

A 1970 Furman graduate, Allison has produced one off-Broadway hit and three successful Broadway shows in less than six years. The casts of his productions have included such theatrical luminaries as Rex Harrison, Claudette Colbert, Jason Robards, Geraldine Page and Colleen Dewhurst.

His skill in both raising money and handling the details of a Broadway show makes him one of a small number of producers who are intimately involved at every step of the project, from choosing the play to making sure the show runs smoothly. "I'm a hands-on producer," he says. "Some producers never darken the door of a theater, but I like to be involved. I enjoy that part of it, and ultimately, I think, that has something to do with the success of the show."

Although Allison's reputation as a successful producer is now well-established, he was virtually unknown 10 years ago when he became managing director of the Neighborhood Playhouse Repertory Company, an outgrowth of the Neighborhood Playhouse School of the Theater. One of his first responsibilities was to produce a Broadway benefit gala to raise money for the company. Held in the Shubert Theater on the fiftieth anniversary of the Neighborhood Playhouse School, the benefit starred Martha Graham, who had taught dance at the school, and many of its famous graduates, including Joanne Woodward, Diane Keaton, Tony Randall, Colleen Dewhurst and David Mamet. Highly successful, the benefit raised a lot of money for the theatre.

"I guess I got caught up in the lure and glamour of the theatre," says Allison. "I made a number of contacts in the Broadway commercial world by doing that benefit."

Although he worked with the theatre company another two years, he began to think about producing commercially on and off-Broadway. In 1981 he decided to devote full time to that effort and began meeting with agents, reading plays and attending play readings and workshops. "Basically I was looking for a project I could produce off-Broadway," he says. "I thought Broadway would be a little more than I could handle in terms of raising money."

After co-producing a musical that
ran off-Broadway four months, Allison found a project that would give his career a tremendous boost. In Variety he read a review of Greater Tuna, a play that was being produced in a tiny theatre in Austin, Texas. Written by actors Jaston Williams and Joe Sears, the play consisted of a series of comic sketches about the mythical town of Tuna, the third smallest town in Texas. It revolved around the broadcast day of Greater Tuna's radio station and involved 20 characters, all played by Sears and Williams.

Allison was so intrigued by the review that he called the actors and asked to see a copy of the script. After reading it, he decided to take an option on the play. "Greater Tuna was budgeted for about $150,000, which was a lot of money to raise at the time, but it was a very small budget compared to the shows I'm doing these days. I started out not knowing really how I would do it, but I went to friends and contacts I had made and was able to raise the money in three or four months."

Allison spent several weeks in Austin, working with Sears, Williams and director Ed Howard to revise the play and develop the characters, which were based largely on the authors' friends, families and acquaintances. After trial runs in Houston, Atlanta and Hartford, Ct., Allison brought the play to the Circle in the Square in New York in October 1982. Although one New York critic described the play as corny, other critics praised it and Greater Tuna became an off-Broadway hit. Audiences in New York, and later across the country, recognized in Greater Tuna and its inhabitants people and places they have known. According to an article in the Greenville News, when the play was presented in Charleston in 1985, one man in the audience was asked how he liked it. He responded, "Are you kidding? I know these people. They all live in Easley."

Television producer Norman Lear saw the play in New York, purchased the television rights, and produced a television adaptation which appeared to critical acclaim on the Home Box Office cable network. Allison says Lear actually took one episode from the play, expanded it and turned it into a pilot show, with the intention of making a series based on the play.

"For some reason, the project never went any further," Allison says. "Even though we would have gotten some money out of it, I was happy in many ways it didn't, because that meant the actors were free to tour the show for me. I could have used other actors, but the original cast was very special. They created these characters, so obviously their performances were unique."

"I love the spontaneity of live theatre—the experience you can only have in live theatre."

Karl Allison

Greater Tuna ran in New York a year and a half. Even before the New York run was over, Allison replaced the New York cast with other actors and took the original cast out to tour the country. The production toured for three years, playing everywhere from Boston and Washington, D.C., to San Francisco, Los Angeles and Palo Alto and all over Texas. In 1985 Allison produced the play at the Spoleto Festival in Charleston, and later that year he took it to the Edinburgh Theatre in Edinburgh, Scotland.

Also in 1985 the authors, who own the rights to the play, began releasing the rights for regional, community, stock and university productions. Allison and the investors receive 40 percent of the royalties earned by leasing these rights. "According to Samuel French, who handles the licensing, Greater Tuna was produced more frequently in 1986 than any other play in the country," says Allison.

"It really proved to be a nice little first show for me," he adds.

While Greater Tuna was still running in New York, Allison was approached by another producer who was trying to move a production of You Can't Take It With You from the Papermill Playhouse in New Jersey to Broadway. The production, which was scheduled to run only two weeks, featured an all-star cast, including Jason Robards, James Coco and Colleen Dewhurst.

"No one thought the show would go beyond two weeks because it was a labor of love," says Allison. "It had to move immediately if it was going to come into New York. The producer, who was having a hard time raising the money, asked me if I wanted to be involved and co-produce the show."

"For my first Broadway show to be one with that caliber of cast was more than I could refuse. I didn't quite know how I could do it but I said absolutely I would be interested. Because of the cast and the fact it was a revival of a famous Pulitzer Prize-winning play, I was able to raise the money quite easily and quickly—actually in just a matter of days."

Allison and his co-producer took the show to Kennedy Center in Washington for five weeks and then in April of 1983 moved it to Broadway, where it ran almost a year. "The show received wonderful reviews and was a huge success," says Allison.

A theatre performance of You Can't Take It With You was taped for television and ran on PBS in 1984. Allison, as well as the actors, investors and the authors' wife and daughter, were paid for the TV rights of the production.

"We received a nice sum of money," says Allison. "But the best thing was to have such a wonderful production documented for posterity. I love the spontaneity of live theatre—the experience you can only have in live theatre—but once you've seen a play, it can only be a memory. There's no way to go back and see what you saw before. The advantage of having something on film is that you can look at it again and again."

Allison's next show was Hey, Ma, an off-Broadway production starring Kay Ballard. "The show was very successful artistically, but it was not successful financially," says Allison. "I was very proud of the show, but it was certainly a loss to me and the investors."

The following year, in the spring of 1985, his production of Aren't We All? opened on Broadway for a limited engagement of 14 weeks. The play featured a large cast headed by Rex Harrison, Claudette Colbert, Jeremy Brett and Lynn Redgrave. It received rave reviews from the critics and played to sold-out houses during the entire run. After the show closed in New York, Allison took it on tour to San Francisco, Los Angeles and Washington.

"It was a highly successful show," says Allison. "One of the nicest things to come out of that production for me was to become very friendly with Rex and Claudette, particularly Claudette." Allison has visited Colbert in her home in Barbados several times, and he often meets her for dinner when she is in New York.

"Claudette is amazing. She's got more energy than I have. And she's just beautiful. Her legs look just like they..."
did in It Happened One Night.

In some ways the 1986-87 season was both disappointing and sad for Allison. His production of Wild Honey, which he brought over from London and recast except for Ian McKellen in the leading role, closed a few weeks after an unfavorable review in the New York Times.

"Wild Honey did a respectable business, but it was a very expensive show," says Allison. "It really hurt me to close it. It was my favorite project. But no one in the business will deny the power of the Times. It really can make or break a show. I've been lucky that most of my shows have gotten wonderful reviews from the Times."

In the spring of 1987 Allison brought the first revival of Noel Coward's Blithe Spirit to Broadway. The play starred Richard Chamberlain, Blythe Danner, Judith Ivey and Geraldine Page, who had recently won an Oscar for her performance in The Trip to Bountiful. The critics' reviews were good, and "business was sensational," says Allison.

But about two and a half months into the run of the play, Geraldine Page did not come to the theatre for a Saturday matinee performance. Alarmed that she had not called, Allison took a cab to her apartment, where he was told by her son that she had become extremely ill. That night after the performance, just as the actors were preparing to leave for a cast party, Allison was forced to tell them that Page had died of a heart attack.

"It was so sudden. It was a shock to all of us," says Allison. "Everyone was so fond of Gerry. Not only was her death devastating in a professional way, but it was a devastating personal loss."

At the request of Page's husband, Allison arranged a memorial service the next week in the Neil Simon Theater, where Blithe Spirit was playing. Page's death and the extensive publicity that followed seemed to cast a pall over Blithe Spirit, and audiences dropped off dramatically. The show's business dropped about $100,000 a week. Although the production was scheduled to run through August, Allison decided to close early.

"We were approaching the summer season, and July and August are always weak months," says Allison. "It was just an arbitrary decision to close the show, but basically you look at the bottom line and see what the numbers are. We had done very well earlier, so it just seemed best to close."

Although Wild Honey and Blithe Spirit did not live up to his expectations, Allison accepts the uncertainty of his business. "To be honest, I have to say that a large amount of luck is involved. You really can't tell when a production will be a hit or what else might happen."

Allison says he isn't sure what makes a successful producer, but he believes all of his experiences - both good and bad - have made him better at what he does. Actually, when he was in school, it never occurred to him that he might become a producer. A political science major at Furman, he was interested in politics and worked in Washington two summers. He wrote for the Paladin and served as its editor during his senior year. After graduation, he worked as a congressional aide in Washington, where he discovered that he was more interested in the arts than in politics.

The first thing Allison does after finding a play and raising the money is look for a director who is willing to collaborate with him. After the director is hired, Allison and the director start making casting decisions.

"We have found that new plays - because they are new - can sometimes make it with unknown actors," he says. "Revivals can have a nice run of three or four months with no names in them, but to really make it over the long haul you need major names for box office purposes."

Allison and the director also select the costume, lighting and set designers and hire other people needed in the production of the show. Allison chooses an advertising agency and a press agent and plans the advertising campaign.

Once the cast is complete, rehearsals begin in a rehearsal hall in Manhattan. Most shows rehearse five or six weeks before opening for a trial run out of town, frequently in Boston, Washington or Los Angeles. After a few weeks, if reviews are good and audiences enthusiastic, Allison brings the show to a theatre in New York.

As opening night nears, Allison's life becomes more hectic. Arriving in his office by 8:30 in the morning, he usually works until 8:30 at night to take care of all the details surrounding a new show. On opening night - in New York or out of town - he is always there.

Once a show is open, Allison enjoys keeping it running. He enjoys guiding the advertising campaign to keep audiences coming as well as dealing with such matters as cast replacements, if the show runs long enough. For him, maintaining a Broadway show, with its eight performances a week, is like running a business.

Because his office is in the heart of the theatre district, it is easy for him to go by the theatre each evening before the play starts. He makes the rounds of the dressing rooms and says hello to all of the actors.

"I love to go to the theatre," he says. "I love to hang around backstage with the actors. I love to create a happy atmosphere. Fortunately we've been able to do that with most of our shows. The stars could have stayed away from everyone else, but it hasn't been that way. We have had a lot of parties and fun together."

Although Allison relishes the glamour and excitement of the theatrical world, he is first of all an astute businessman. With Broadway production costs ranging from about $1 mil-
lion for straight plays to $5 or $6 million for musicals, he chooses his shows very carefully—on the basis of what he hopes is their audience appeal and his ability to finance them. He regrets the high cost of theatre tickets but points out that theatre prices have not increased any more proportionately than movie prices.

"We charged $42.50 as the top price for all shows of *Aren't We All?*," he says. "When you went to the theatre, you saw a wonderful, entertaining show, with gorgeous sets and gorgeous costumes and Rex Harrison and Claudette Colbert. I thought people were getting their money's worth. I don't have any apologies to make for that price because it was a wonderful evening seeing those two legends who will not be here forever on stage together."

Allison believes that the industry as a whole flourishes when there are many good shows on Broadway. "Some people hate competition. They think if they have the only good play in town, audiences will go to see it, but that's not true. When there's not a whole range of shows, people who would usually come to New York from out of town to see theatre don't come. They only come when there are 10 plays to see. I am always happy when a new theatre bill goes up because that means business in general will be up."

When none of his shows are running, he divides much of his time between New York, Los Angeles and London. Recently elected to the board of the Spoleto Festival, he flies to Charleston occasionally and also visits his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Jack Allison, in Greenville.

The main luxury he allows himself in New York is to take a taxi from his apartment on East 92nd Street to his mid-town office. After *Greater Tuna* opened and he made "a little money," he decided he would never take another subway or bus. He enjoys riding through Central Park and seeing the trees on his way to work.

Allison's current project is a production of *Blithe Spirit*, starring Tony Randall, Lynn Redgrave and Jean Stapleton, which is touring the country for six months. In the spring he will produce another off-Broadway play, *Nighthawks* by Douglas Steinberg, starring Judith Ivey and John Lithgow.

Also this spring he plans to co-produce a television movie of *Blithe Spirit*, starring Richard Chamberlain. He is considering the production of a movie from another play, *Mumbo Jumbo* by Irish playwright Robin Glendinning, which he produced in tryout workshop in London last year.

Raising money to produce films is easier than raising money to produce plays because films have a longer afterlife, says Allison. Even if a movie is unsuccessful at the box office, the home video market and the sale of foreign distribution rights make a film more financially lucrative than a play.

Yet the lure of Broadway is still strong. Allison is considering other shows, both serious and lighthearted. When he finds plays to his liking and circumstances are right, he will create other magical evenings for theatre audiences, with glamorous stars and spectacular sets. "I love plays that audiences enjoy, that make people laugh," he says. "I think there's no greater feeling a producer could have than to see an audience having a good time. You feel you have made some kind of contribution."
And now, presenting the Furman Theatre Guild's 1987-88 schedule: Sand Mountain... Look Back in Anger... A Company of Wayward Saints... The Adding Machine.

Granted, these aren't exactly the box office smashes you read about in Time or Newsweek, and they aren't the kind of plays that make up a typical season on Broadway, where profit and name recognition are primary motivators. Nor would many community theatres be likely to produce such a series of lesser known works in one season, because to survive they need money, and to make money they need audiences, and to lure audiences they need plays with a certain amount of marquee value.

But from the perspective of educational theatre, the reasoning behind the Theatre Guild's 1987-88 season is clear. The primary goal is to present theatre that offers a learning experience for everyone involved, whether onstage, backstage or in the audience. At the same time, the drama department is mindful of its place in a university setting and of how its productions can contribute to Furman's overall educational mission. As Dr. Courtlandt Gilmour, chairman of the drama department, says, "We'll do a play we feel is important for students to work on even when we know the title and author might not have high recognition value."

This is not to say that professional and community theatres never take chances, or that educational theatre is so intent on teaching that it is oblivious to the interests of the audience. But it seems clear that from an artistic viewpoint, educational theatre, which does not have to worry so much about paying the bills, enjoys a certain amount of freedom that more commercially minded theatres do not have.

Dr. Phil Hill, who usually directs two plays a year at Furman, champions the cause of educational theatre. "In the academic environment, you have almost complete freedom to pick any script you want to do," he says. "There is so much that doesn't sell in New York and that you rarely see in professional or community theatres; it leaves university theatres as the repository for probably 80 to 90 percent of the world's dramatic literature. It's a tremendous advantage to be able to choose from so much."

It's also a bit of a liability, though, precisely because of the vast numbers of plays in search of a production. All directors have lists of plays they would love to produce, and the lists tend to get longer as time passes. So, how does the drama department at Furman decide on its season each year?

The primary consideration, according to Gilmour, is the value of a play for the education and training of students, both from acting and technical standpoints. The department also tries to maintain a sense of balance by presenting, over a span of four years, plays that represent a wide range of periods and styles. In addition, Gilmour says, "We want to give the finest possible production of each show for the theatre-going public and offer them the opportunity to see plays other theatres probably won't do."

With this philosophy as a base, the directors—Gilmour, Hill and Rhett Bryson—and costumer Margaret Pyfrom hold innumerable meetings to try to decide on a four- or five-play
season. Amid the wheedling, cajoling and haggling, other factors enter into the decision: audience appeal, casting needs ("Will we be able to find 17 men?").technical requirements, and whether the play can be performed effectively in Furman's intimate but somewhat limited Playhouse. Of the department's 150-seat home, built in 1969 as a temporary facility, Gilmour says, "Our motto is 'Every obstacle becomes an opportunity.'"

Often, current events or campus happenings influence the selections. In the spring of 1986, for example, the Theatre Guild produced The Blood Knot, Athol Fugard's powerful play about South Africa, and in 1985 it presented The Mandrake in conjunction with Furman's Renaissance Festival. Next year, it may produce a play by Eugene O'Neill in honor of the centennial of his birth.

The four plays on this year's schedule provide a good sample of different theatrical styles and of the Theatre Guild's versatility. Sand Mountain, by Romulus Linney, explores the customs and mores of Appalachian mountain life. Look Back in Anger, John Osborne's angry play written in the mid-fifties, is probably the best known of the four and is credited with launching the period of contemporary theatre in Britain. A Company of Wayward Saints is from the commedia dell'arte style popular in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, and The Adding Machine, first produced in 1923, is an example of expressionism, a style in which the audience sees the play world through the consciousness of a character in the play.

No popular favorites in this group, perhaps, but each does provide a different look at the world, a different style of production, a different educational experience. Bryson says, "Our audiences understand that we're doing educational theatre. They enjoy seeing the educational process in action, and they enjoy seeing students struggling as actors, getting better and working with a variety of styles."

"There's nothing more practical than a theatre major."
Rhett Bryson

Of course, even though virtually all performances in the Playhouse are sold out, not every play is an unqualified success. This year, critics for the Greenville News and Piedmont found Sand Mountain a pleasant enough production, but thought the script itself was a bit dull for popular tastes. One critic, while acknowledging the play's merits from an educational standpoint, suggested that audiences would be better off to wait for something a bit more interesting. Look Back in Anger, however, received glowing notices for its intensity and strong performances.

Gilmour and his colleagues realize they won't hit a home run every time out. "We don't expect everyone to enjoy every play," Gilmour says. "But we're looking for consistent quality in the shows." And they learn from their mistakes. Bryson says, "One of the worst shows we've done from a public viewpoint actually turned out to be one of the best because everyone involved learned so much."

Some might think that at a school with, on average, only five to ten drama majors at any one time, quality would be an elusive goal. But at Furman, even with non-majors forming the core of virtually every production, it has never been a problem. Hill's eight-person cast for Sand Mountain included no drama majors; Look Back in Anger had two majors in its five-person cast, with two others Gilmour likes to call "crypto majors"—students who appear in many productions even though they're majoring in another subject.

"That we have so many non-majors who make a commitment to work on a production is consistent with the liberal arts approach," says Gilmour. "Our shows are better because we have, say, a psychology major in the cast." Bryson says, "Our students take classes in many different subjects—philosophy, history, religion—and they're articulate in those areas. They can discuss the subjects intelligently, think independently, pick up on ideas and apply them in a show."

Non-majors make a tremendous contribution to every show. Much of the help in scene construction, costume and other technical areas comes from students in the department's introductory course to the theatre. The students are required to complete 20 hours of "lab" time during the term; they earn their hours by doing a variety of things, from performing in a play to working in the box office, ushering or tracking down props or costumes. In this way they learn about all phases of play production, and at the same time the department is assured of the help it needs.

But is Furman, with its small department and somewhat limited facilities, a good place for a drama major? Faculty members make a strong case for their program.

Hill believes that schools like Furman often offer more than larger schools. "Students have a higher probability of doing a wider variety of things at a smaller school," he says. "At a
larger school with a graduate program, they're not likely to get a better part until they're juniors or seniors, and even then they're competing with graduate students. Many larger schools also devote their attention to professional training instead of the liberal arts, and that's not our interest."

Bryson says that Furman drama majors have an advantage because they receive a general degree. "They're not strictly studying directing or design," he says. "We expect our students to do everything and to be educated in all areas." Margaret Pyfrom emphasizes another aspect of Furman's program: "There's not nearly the pressure you find at other schools. We don't expect our students to eat, live, sleep and breathe theatre 24 hours a day, but we do encourage them to find summer jobs in theatre and to work with other theatres when they have the chance."

And to those students who say they would like to major in drama but think they should pursue something more practical, Bryson has a ready response. "There's nothing more practical than a theatre major," he says. "You learn to manage time, material resources and human resources, deal with finances, implement a plan, analyze it before and after it is in effect, and meet a schedule and deadlines. These are very practical, marketable skills, skills that can easily be put to use in the job market."

While they work to refine their talents toward whatever professional goal they may have, in or out of the theatre, Furman drama students can take pride in the program's standing. Over 50 percent of this year's season-ticket holders come from outside the Furman community, a figure that says something about the Theatre Guild's strong ties to Greenville and the surrounding area. In addition, Gilmour says that in recent years more Furman students seem to be attending plays than in the past. He's not sure what the reason is, but this much does seem certain: educational theatre is thriving on the Furman campus, and through the quality and variety of its productions, the Furman Theatre Guild has established its own clear, well-defined place in the theatrical life of Greenville.

With the set of Look Back in Anger in the background, instructor Margaret Pyfrom explains the elements of a well-made play to her Introduction to Drama class (top). Students in Rhett Bryson's scene design class study drawing techniques from a theatrical perspective.
THE KING OF CLUBS

BY VINCE MOORE

After years of struggle,
Betsy King has joined
the LPGA’s ruling class.

Betsy King's success with the putter is more than just a stroke of good luck.

Shore, and earning nearly $400,000 in prize money. When she and her accomplishments were introduced to the gallery on the first tee earlier in the day, the numbers sounded almost gaudy, an impression she seemed to acknowledge with a brief, reserved tip of her cap.

After finishing her round, she had done the cursory newspaper and television interviews, and then spent almost an hour on the practice range, hitting through the clubs in her bag and carefully measuring the results of each shot. She had been on the course since 9:30 that morning, when she had gone through almost the same practice ritual prior to the round.

One of those watching King practice is fellow golfer Donna White, a longtime friend who joined the LPGA tour the same year as King. Although the two of them have been good-natured rivals from the very beginning—White won her first tournament three years before King—White now has a husband and a child and a schedule that keeps her at home more often than not.

“Betsy’s always the first one here and the last one to leave,” White says, motioning toward the practice green. “There are 11 other players here who are having great years and you don’t see any of them out here this late. That’s why she is one of the best players on tour. No matter how well she does, she wants to do better.”

Although King has always had such work habits, she has not always enjoyed such success. And White, who is at the tournament not as a participant but as a commentator for ESPN television, laughingly recalls the days when the two of them joined the tour, long before King became a dominant player. She says that King was a shy, quiet girl who didn’t know a whole lot about her golf swing and had precious little tournament experience. She did not participate in the usual locker room banter, and her demeanor appeared to be even

King’s intense concentration precludes her chatting with the gallery, but it’s made her one of the best golfers in the world.
more serious than it was, which White says was considerable.

But she recalls that even then, when King had not won a tournament and struggled every year to finish among the top 20 players, it was obvious that she was no less competitive than the best player on tour. White says that King took a special delight in beating her, claiming that King would check the scoreboard right after her round not to see how she had fared against the rest of the field, but to see if she had posted a better score than White.

"You could see it even then," White says, smiling at the recollection and taking a certain pride in her friend's accomplishments since those days. "She had all the desire and determination anybody would ever need to play this game."

Finally, King is through practicing. Her caddy takes her golf bag to the clubhouse's storage room. In a little while, she will eat dinner in the hotel restaurant with her parents, who have driven down from Pennsylvania for the tournament, and a few friends. Then she will get some sleep and be at the golf course early the next morning, where her never-ending determination to succeed will once again be tested by the hazards and imperfections that comprise the game of golf.

More than 15 years ago, when their children were still in high school, Mr. and Mrs. Weir L. King came south each year to vacation at Hilton Head Island, S.C. So when it came time for their son, Lee, to go to college, it was only natural that they decided to look at some Southern schools. Although they decided to visit Wake Forest and Furman, they made a wrong turn on their way to Greenville and never found Furman. Not surprisingly, their son is now a Wake Forest alumnus.

A year later, when their daughter, Betsy, was looking for a school, the Kings made a special effort to find Furman on their way back from Hilton Head. Betsy, who wasn't with them, heard her father's report when he returned home. "He told me that Furman was a good academic school with a pretty campus and that it had its own golf course," King says. "That sounded pretty good to me, especially the part about the golf course."

So in the fall of 1973, Mary Beth King, a good student who was interested in basketball and field hockey as well as golf, enrolled at Furman. She says she was a "straight arrow" during college and when she wasn't studying, she was involved in athletics. Basket-

ball, in fact, was her favorite sport. She didn't become serious about golf until after she had suffered a severe knee injury, which limited her abilities in basketball, and then realized that golf was the only sport that offered her a good chance at a professional career.

King's golf career at Furman was noteworthy. She was an integral part of the women's team that won the AIAW national championship in 1976 and she finished as the low amateur in the 1976 U.S. Women's Open. Still, her amateur record was not the best in the country. It was not even the best at Furman. That honor belonged to teammate Beth Daniel, whose devotion to golf was formed years before King's and whose brilliant amateur record included U.S. Amateur titles in 1975 and 1977.

Betsy King has won more tournaments than any other golfer on the LPGA tour during the past four years.

"A lot of people forget that Betsy didn't have a lot of amateur tournament experience when she came on tour," says White, who won the U.S. Amateur title in 1976. "She just wasn't that strong of a player in college."

King arrived on the LPGA tour in the summer of 1977, just a few weeks after graduating from Furman. In eight tournaments, she won $4,008 and compiled a 74.46 scoring average. In her first full year on tour, she won a little more than $44,000 and her best tournament finish was a tie for second place.

King finished twentieth on the money list that year, which, while not all that bad, still allowed her to make her way around the golf course in anonymity. Daniel, by contrast, won six tournaments her first two seasons on tour and more than $325,000 in prize money.

"To be perfectly honest, I didn't pay much attention to Betsy her first few years out here," says Pat Bradley, one of the tour's brightest stars during the past decade and now one of King's chief rivals. "But out here you don't focus on somebody until they start to make some noise."

King's third year on tour still produced no noise, nor did the next two. In six full years, she played in 181 LPGA tournaments and didn't win any of them. Her best individual year-end rank was nineteenth and her worst fiftieth. Her scoring average was roughly 74, a figure that suggested she was light years away from joining the tour's elite.

But statistics don't always tell the story. King was not discouraged and her failures only made her work harder. Besides, even though the casual observer might not have noticed, she was beginning to construct the golf swing that would serve her well in a few years and, maybe even more importantly, to develop a peace of mind that could withstand the whims of the game.

The pivotal year in King's life was 1980. Early in the year, some friends convinced her to attend a conference sponsored by the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. The meeting had a profound effect on her and she soon became a Christian.

Predictably, she is not the type who believes that God took a sudden interest in her golf game and made sure she won tournaments. Instead, her faith gave her a different set of priorities.

"Before, my whole sense of self-esteem was based on what I did on the golf course," King says. "If I played poorly, I was depressed. If I played well, I felt better. But then I learned that the score I shoot doesn't make me the person I am. I realized I had other decent qualities that had nothing to do with how well I hit a golf ball."

Still, even the best frame of mind cannot support the burden of a fundamentally flawed golf swing, which is exactly what King had before she met Ed Oldfield, a golf professional from Phoenix, Ariz., in the fall of 1980. She was struggling mightily in the Portland Ping Team Championship at the time, and it was her old friend and teammate in the event, Donna White, who got the two of them together.

"I had some faults in my swing that led to inconsistencies and Ed helped me work them out," says King, who was so impressed with Oldfield's instruction that she moved to Arizona to be closer to him. "I worked with him for three straight months before I ever teed it up in competition."

King says she showed some improvement in 1981, even winning a Japanese tournament late in the year, her first as a professional. She also felt she made some improvement the next two seasons, but, still, she did nothing that could prepare the LPGA tour for what would happen in 1984, the year her new swing and her fierce determination joined forces.

She won her first LPGA tournament
at the Women's Kemper Open and, five weeks later, her second at the Freedom Orlando Classic. She won one more tournament during the year, earned $266,771 in prize money (nearly three times her previous best) and was named Rolex Player of the Year. The quiet, reserved girl who had wandered for nearly a decade along the outskirts of the LPGA had suddenly arrived on Main Street.

"There is just no substitute for winning," King says, "and I guess the first win is the most important. You finally realize that you don't have to play the tournament of your life to win. You learn that you can miss a few putts, that you can mis-hit a shot here and there and still win."

King won two more LPGA tournaments in 1985, as well as the Ladies British Open. She won two tournaments the following year and then, of course, had her best year ever in 1987. She won four tournaments, $460,385 in prize money, and her scoring average of 71.14 was the best on tour, giving her the prestigious Vare Trophy. Even though she lost the LPGA's Player of the Year honors to Ayako Okamoto during the final event of the season—an award based on a complex point system—King was named 1987 Player of the Year by a number of American golf publications as well as the Golf Writers Association of America.

"Betsy is a perfect example of what hard work can do for you," Bradley says. "She's very dedicated and she deserves every bit of success she's gotten. She's playing about as well right now as anybody has ever played out here."

While it's true that Betsy King has won more tournaments than any other golfer on the LPGA tour during the past four years, it's also true that her success has yet to foster the sort of public adulation that one might expect. Her product endorsements are relatively few and she is no match in the media marketplace for such LPGA stars as Jan Stephenson and Nancy Lopez, who together didn't win more tournaments than King in 1987.

The gallery likes their golfers to be glib and carefree while they're shooting par or better, and King admits that's not her style. She makes her way around the course with a stern, sometimes grim, expression, and her Titleist cap is forever pulled down into a posi-

If King is calmly tugging at her hat and the crowd is cheering, you know she must have done something spectacular.
tion that hides much of her face. When she does something that brings cheers from the gallery, which happens often, her response is to grab the bill of her cap with her thumb and forefinger and give it a polite tug, as if she were trying to convince the crowd that it wasn't really that much of an accomplishment.

"I've often said that Betsy is the only person out here who is embarrassed to make a birdie," White said, laughing. "But she's not as bad as she used to be."

Although King knows that her career might be better served if she smiled more when she is on the golf course, she also knows that she can't be someone she is not. She admits she is uncomfortable with the idea that people have come to the golf course to watch her perform, and whatever has driven her all these years begins and ends with what she expects of herself, a desire which has nothing to do with wanting to be appreciated by others.

"Not everybody can smile and talk to the gallery and still be one of the best players out here," White says. "Betsy is more intense when she's on the course and that's just her way. She's focused into her game and that obviously works well for her."

Jim Gilmore, King's caddy, says, "She's really into what she's doing. She's not the Nancy Lopez type of person, so she's not going to be talking to the gallery. But she talks to me and she's really a pleasant person. She's fun to work for."

Yes, golf is the thing King enjoys, not the celebrity that comes with playing well. If she had her way, she would pass on the newspaper headlines, programs, television cameras, autograph seekers and the various other distractions that keep her from working on her game.

King helped organize the annual Furman-LPGA Pro-Am, which has raised $200,000 for men's and women's golf.

"The hardest part of playing on the tour is handling the demands of the press, handling the people you have to deal with on a daily basis," she says. "I'm always wondering if I'm saying the wrong thing. The easy part is the golf."

While King may not feel as comfortable on stage as some of her fellow players, she is still not the dour, machine-like creature some make her out to be. Privately, she is gracious and displays a surprisingly good sense of humor. She has also been willing to go before the television cameras and to attend the numerous hand-shaking functions in an effort to publicize the LPGA tour.

"Betsy's a more mature, confident person than she was when she first came out here," White said. "She's more at ease with herself."

There is no greater clue to King's personality than the annual Furman-LPGA Pro-Am, an event that she helped organize in 1982 to raise money for the men's and women's golf programs at Furman. Not only did she come up with the idea without any suggestion from the administration, but she did it long before she became an established player on the LPGA tour.

"I remember saying in college, when we were having trouble getting money for the women's sports programs, that I would help those programs if I ever had the chance," says King, who has also endowed a women's golf scholarship in her name. "Once I got on tour, I could see what a pro-am could do in terms of raising money and, after talking to some people at Furman, we decided to do it."

King was in charge of most everything those first few years, from convincing other players to come to the tournament to working out travel arrangements. Once, according to her agent Jay Burton, she was offered $40,000 plus expenses to play three tournaments in Europe, but declined when she learned the dates conflicted with the Furman Pro-Am. Now the tournament is hugely successful, having raised nearly $200,000 in six years, and it is no coincidence that Furman's women's golf program is one of the finest in the country.

"I don't think many people are aware of just how much Betsy has done for this school, without expecting anything in return," says Willie Miller, coach of the men's golf program. "I also think it says a lot that even though she was obviously a part of the women's golf program here at Furman, she wanted the pro-am to benefit the men's program, too."

There are other things, none of which King is likely to volunteer, that help explain the type of person she is. For instance, during the second Furman-LPGA Pro-Am, Luke Dobson, a nine-year-old Greenville boy who came to the tournament with his mother, approached King between holes and informed her that they both had the same birthday, August 13. Four months later, he received a birthday card in the
mail. Mrs. Dobson says that King has sent him one every year since, as well as an annual Christmas card addressed to the whole family.

It's also true that she and a few other LPGA players spent a recent week in eastern Tennessee building houses for the Jimmy Carter project, Habitat for Humanity. King had been on the Furman campus for her tenth year class reunion as part of the 1987 Homecoming festivities, then left for Tennessee where she dug post holes, hammered nails, painted walls and did various other projects.

It is worth mentioning that King was hammering nails while her two competitors for the LPGA's Player of the Year honors, Okamoto and Jane Geddes, were in Japan preparing for the final LPGA tournament of the year, an event that would decide the winner of the award.

Yet some people still complain because she doesn't always smile when she's on the golf course.

Betsy King did not win the Nestle's World Championship. She finished second to Okamoto, one stroke out of the lead. But she made a strong finish during the last day, shooting a 68 and charging from four shots off the pace. It served as a reminder, just in case any of the players had forgotten, that King is one of those select players on tour who are a threat to win any time they show up at a tournament.

Physically, King has even fewer peers on tour. She hits the ball long and high, which not only looks good, but makes for short approach shots and allows her to get to just about any pin position. Her swing, arguably the most fundamentally sound on tour, is built for the long run, for the day-to-day grind of competition, and she says she hasn't been in a real, honest-to-goodness slump since she broke through in 1984.

"Betsy is so physically strong," White says. "She goes at every shot full speed, whether it's the driver or the wedge. She's really a very good athlete."

"I'm impressed with her length," says Bradley, "and she is strong from tee to green. But she has also become a good putter and she doesn't let many putts get away. That's where you score."

King has no idea how much longer she wants to play on the LPGA tour. It is a grind by any measure and it's one whale of a grind if you want to be the tour's best player. It's a life of traveling, of staying in motels and eating in restaurants, and when you get past your early 20s and the thrill of seeing new places every week, the golf course becomes your office.

"It's a hard life out there," White says. "People don't realize how hard it really is. You don't have much time for anything other than golf and you have to sacrifice a lot. Betsy has done what it takes."

When it is time to quit, King has ideas about what she wants to do. She has said that she wants to get married and have a family, and possibly get into some sort of Christian ministry. She also says that getting involved in athletic administration at a college or university might interest her.

"But I wouldn't be a very good coach," she says, laughing. "I would be too demanding. Since I was such a straight arrow in college, it would drive me crazy if my players were wanting to party all the time."

It is easy to imagine that King will excel at whatever she chooses to do, if not at first then certainly at some point. Determination is not something she has had to learn. Ruth Reid, a retired member of Furman's physical education department who knew King well while she was at Furman, says she never doubted that Betsy would someday become one of the best golfers on the LPGA tour.

"Betsy always put everything she had into a project, no matter what it was," Reid said. "She was an excellent student and an excellent athlete and she had a very disciplined lifestyle. She just had this incredible tenacity to go after things."

That tenacity is evident during the final round of the Nestle's tournament as King is making her move to catch Okamoto. While the leaders are faltering, she is playing well and moving confidently about the course with that long, deliberate stride of hers. As her name, spelled out in two-foot high letters, moves near the top of the leaderboard, you can't help but think about how far she has truly come.

She makes birdies on the fifteenth and sixteenth holes to tie Okamoto for the lead. Then she politely grabs the bill of her cap to acknowledge the crowd and you are reminded that, while the woman and the athlete have matured, both physically and mentally, there remains much of the girl who wore a path between the Furman campus and golf course 10 years ago, the one almost embarrassed to make a birdie.

THE FURMAN-LPGA CONNECTION

Betsy King may be the most visible Furman graduate currently playing on the LPGA tour, but she is certainly not the only one. There are eight Furman alumni on tour, and, considering there were only 250 players who qualified for tour cards in 1987, that says plenty about the quality of the women's golf program at Furman.

Those currently making their livings on the LPGA tour are Beth Solomon ’75, Cindy Ferro ’76, Beth Daniel ’78, Sherri Turner ’79, Melissa Whitmire ’80, Joan Delk ’83, Sara Anne (Timms) McGetrick ’85 and Dottie Pepper-Mochrie ’87. Daniel, a former Player of the Year whose career has been hampered recently by back problems, is one of the tour's best players, having won 14 tournaments and nearly $1.4 million in prize money. Solomon and Turner have also enjoyed their share of success, with career earnings of $358,910 and $284,686, respectively. Solomon won her only tournament in 1981.
Soon after becoming editor of the Furman Magazine in 1963, I wrote to Max Steele to ask him to write an article for the magazine. The author of a Harper Prize novel and numerous short stories, Steele was one of the few alumni we knew who were professional writers, so it seemed logical to contact him.

He replied that he would consider writing an article, but in the meantime he had one criticism of the magazine: the order in which news about alumni appeared. "It's rather sad to go through a magazine filled with news and have it all end in Death. It more or less negates any excitement or purpose in the events reported. Where does it all end? Here. I'm wondering if it wouldn't be more cheerful, if the Vital Statistics must come last, to end on Births?" He was right, of course, and we promptly moved alumni deaths away from the back of the magazine.

Two years later he wrote to say he had decided to write an article about Mrs. Meta Gilpatrick, who taught English at Furman for more than 30 years. A few weeks later a copy of the article arrived, along with a note saying he had mailed a copy to Mrs. Gilpatrick for her approval. After two changes that she suggested, the article, entitled "English 23a: A Paper Long Overdue," ran in the summer 1966 issue of the Furman Magazine.

Unlike most profiles, Steele's article contained little information about the personal life of its subject. Instead, Steele tried to capture the mood of an advanced composition class taught by Mrs. Gilpatrick, which he took in the fall of 1942.

What has he learned by the end of that term, he asks in the article. "Not, ironically enough, a great many facts from this woman who seemingly has an endless file of them. And not, in terms of a lifetime profession, a great deal about the techniques of fiction. But perhaps something far more important has been taking place in these afternoon classes. One has learned to listen, above the sound of the rain, to an inflection in a wise woman's voice which says this is simple and true and therefore poetry; or to another inflection, a flat, bored tone, which says this is exaggerated, pretentious, not seen or felt, and is therefore unworthy. And if a man is lucky, he can, years later, read his own words and hear that voice, and know nothing much about writing in general, but a great deal about a particular passage which is giving him trouble. He can, if he has time to wait and listen carefully, hear the words in her voice and know... it works or doesn't work: it is true or false."

Last spring "English 23a" was reprinted in a new book, An Apple for My Teacher, edited by Louis D. Rubin, Jr., and published by Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill. The book also contains essays by 11 other writers, including John Barth, Alfred Kazin, George Garrett, Fred Chappell and Elizabeth Spencer. It was reviewed favorably in a number of national publications, and a segment on National Public Radio was devoted to it. On May 3, 1987, a review appeared in the New York Times Review of Books under this headline that stretched across the page: "Thank You, Mrs. Gilpatrick."

What would Mrs. Gilpatrick think if she had seen her name in large type in the New York Times? Surely her husband, Dr. D.H. Gilpatrick, would have enjoyed it immensely.

At any rate, we thank Max Steele for writing the article in the first place and for his continued help through the years. If the Furman Magazine has been of any real value, it is because of a few articles such as his that are simple and true and therefore poetry.

M.H.
A PLEASING PLACE

The spring issue of the Furman Magazine is fascinating, especially from one's Montague Hall orientation of 1924 at Furman. The bell tower was the aesthetic pagoda of that day. Very simply, the Roe Art Building could not then have been imagined. In fact, art appreciation was not a factor in whatever culture Furman advocated at the time. The new building brings Furman abreast in the art world, and I rejoice in the color and design. The hall views are inviting. I hope its acoustics will allow one to enjoy good music.

If it enhances the aesthetic development, it will have been well worthwhile. It's a more pleasing environment than the old downtown campus. If I could be at Furman again, it would be just the place I should go to.

Styles Ezell '28
Manchester Center, Vt.

The spring edition of the Furman Magazine was an outstanding publication. I was a music major but I've always been interested in art. The article and the pictures of the new Roe Art Building were most impressive. The coverage on Faulton Hodge was excellent, too.

I would like to send a copy of the magazine to my cousin who is an art teacher in New York. If you have an extra copy, please send it to me. I don't want to part with my copy. It is just beautiful.

Wilda Bell '55
Asheville, N.C.

ARCHITECTURAL MUSINGS

I thought your article on the Roe building and our musings was excellent. The magazine is stunning in its design as well . . . a beautiful publication.

Michael J. Crosbie
Senior Editor
Architecture
Branford, Ct.

I have just returned from a two-week business trip to Scandinavia and found the spring issue of Furman Magazine waiting for me on my desk. I very much enjoyed the article on the Roe Art Building and, of course, was especially interested in the summation of the architecture symposium. It brought back pleasant memories of my brief visit to Furman, and it's gratifying to know that our little gathering of writers has been captured forever on the printed page. You have produced a handsome magazine, and I congratulate you for it.

Paul Sachner
Senior Editor
Architectural Record
New York, N.Y.

THE RIGHT IMAGE

The Furman Magazine's new format is a class act and befits the university's overall projection.

Junius H. Garrison, Jr. '49
President
The Furman Company
Greenville, S.C.

The new magazine was outstanding! I had wondered what had happened to it.

Jim Walker '48
Columbia, S.C.

IT HAPPENED BEFORE

In reading the Furman Magazine, I was very much interested in the write-up, "Foreign Study in the Rockies," by Dr. John Batson. I noticed he said that this was the first group in Furman's history to take the course, Biology 51, from Arizona to Canada. That may be true in regard to course 51, but in my senior year in 1938 Dr. Holland, professor of geology, made up a trip almost exactly like the one Dr. Batson described. I was one of the ten people who made the trip.

We lived together, ate together, rode together and hiked together. We left Greenville in June and returned in August of 1938. We traveled 1,100 miles, visiting the national parks west of the Missouri River, down in old Mexico and up to Lake Louise in Canada.

We traveled the hard way, doing our own cooking, sleeping in a tent and pulling a trailer behind our car to carry provisions. I could write much more about the trip but the recent Furman group experienced many of the things we did.

I really enjoyed the trip and have rocks and minerals that I collected along the way. Just wanted to let you know that we made the trip.

T.W. Freeman '38
Greenville, S.C.
HOT STUFF Drama student Joe Springer mastered the skill of fire-eating for the Furman Theatre Guild's production of A Company of Wayward Saints (page 18).