N.C. visionary McKinney dies at 79

*He was a force at RTP, N.C. State*

**By Jay Price**

STAFF WRITER

A single part wasn’t enough for Claude McKinney’s restless mind.

McKinney’s concern was always the whole, whether it was the clothes he picked each morning, how he organized the NCSU School of Design or honed the look and feel of Research Triangle Park and NCSU’s Centennial Campus.

Now a crucial part North Carolina itself is missing: McKinney, the visionary former design school dean, died Tuesday after a painful and rare brain illness.

He was 79.

“He had one of the most profound influences on North Carolina of anyone since the end of World War II,” said Bill Friday, former president of the UNC system. “He was truly a renaissance man.”

Friday was the system president when McKinney was recruited to lead the design school in 1973, and had front-row seats when McKinney helped fashion Research Triangle Park and led the push to build the Centennial Campus against years of resistance from critics who thought it could never be built.

Centennial Campus now has 28 buildings totalling 2.36 million square feet that house university, corporate and government offices and labs, many of them aimed at research and development. The buildings, though, are part of a holistic mix that also includes housing and recreational facilities such as a golf course, all fitted carefully onto more than 1,300 acres.

McKinney was born in Greensboro to a Methodist minister and his wife. He lived in 10 parsonages

SEE *MCKINNEY*, PAGE 10A
across the western part of the state, in some cases without running water, according to his son-in-law, Matthew Szulik of Raleigh, chairman of the board of Red Hat, Inc.

McKinney graduated with honors from Pfeiffer Junior College and from the University of North Carolina in 1951 with a degree in painting and design. He also did graduate work in the same subjects at UNC.

While a student at UNC, he worked summers at the outdoor drama "Unto These Hills," in Cherokee, acting and doing set design. There he met Mary Ann "Mimi" McCall, who played a Cherokee dancer. When he died, they had been married 57 years.

After college, McKinney dropped plans to become a sculptor and joined the Navy, where he worked in industrial design. Later, he worked for an animation company in New York. In 1969, he joined a research group affiliated with Columbia, Md., a small city being built from scratch. There, his job was to convene architects, financiers and developers to discuss ways to build cities, a role that foreshadowed the work he was to do in North Carolina.

Concern for balance

After joining the design school at NCSU, he elevated departments that his predecessor had neglected, trying to bring a proper balance, said Norma DeCamp Burns of Chatham County, who started graduate school there shortly after McKinney's arrival.

In Raleigh, McKinney campaigned against a state plan to construct high-rise office buildings because they would cast shadows on the Capitol, he urged streetscape improvements along Hillsborough Street adjacent to the NCSU campus and helped save the old Watts Hospital buildings to serve the N.C. School of Science and Mathematics in Durham.

He also became closely involved with development of the Research Triangle Park, which bears many similarities to Centennial Campus today. McKinney insisted that it have a uniform system of identification signs and helped develop a landscape plan that emphasized natural areas, something that became the hallmark of the park and has been copied worldwide. He also led the building committee for the National Humanities Center.

When the state gave NCSU land off Western Boulevard for Centennial Campus in the mid-1980s, then-Chancellor Bruce Poulton tapped McKinney to guide its development.

Turbulence at NCSU

McKinney resigned from NCSU in 1988, citing a "climate of mutual disrespect," after some of the design faculty voted to oust him in an internal squabble. The university, however, thought so much of him that the administration expanded his part-time job as chief planner and advocate for Centennial Campus to full-time.

It gave him more giant canvas on which to paint a complicated whole.

He couldn't have been happier, he said in an interview later.

McKinney's attire was assembled each day with the same attention to overall effect, from shirts to smaller details such as the cufflinks and socks.

"The designer Alexander Julian called him best appointed man he had ever known," Szulik said.

McKinney passed his holistic philosophy on through hundreds of students that attended the design school, and to anyone who visits the Centennial Campus or RTP.

The latter, Friday said, still puzzles some visitors who feel that it's a terrific place, but can't quite grasp how it works so well.

McKinney died of a disease called supranuclear palsy. It was painful for months, but he was able to attend a granddaughter's college graduation in May. As recently as Friday, he was able to discuss pie — he loved dessert — and to name a favorite that he felt fit the current season: warm apple with vanilla ice cream.

McKinney is survived by his wife, daughter Kyle Szulik and his son, Kevin, and five grandchildren.

Matthew Szulic, his son in law, said McKinney left his life like he had lived it, on a day that fit: The former Navy man died on Veterans Day.

A celebration of McKinney's life will be held Friday at 2:30 p.m. at the Long View Center, 118 S. Person St.

jay.price@newsobserver.com or 919-829-4526
New lease on an active life

A Duke-led study shows heart-failure patients can exercise and thrive

BY SARAH AVERY
STAFF WRITER

Contrary to popular belief, people with heart failure can work out at the gym, ride bikes and participate in other exercises that once were considered dangerously strenuous, a large international study led by Duke University researchers has found.

The findings free heart patients to be active, and are likely to fuel an effort to change public policy, study authors say. Currently, Medicare and many private insurers do not cover doctor-guided exercise programs for patients who have heart failure.

The disease, which afflicts 5 million Americans, is diagnosed when the heart loses pumping force because of blockages, a heart attack or other causes. Treatments costs Medicare more than $4.5 billion a year.

For many doctors, the lack of insurance coverage was stuck in old fears that exercise would create a strain that could kill heart failure patients. In more recent years, smaller studies have shown that exercise is helpful, but the findings weren’t large enough to influence coverage decisions. The Duke study was designed in size and scope to be definitive. It followed 2,331 patients at 82 health centers in the United States, Canada and France for more than two years. Half the patients got the normal care, including checkups and hypertension drugs. The other half got normal care, plus they were asked to start exercising on a treadmill or stationary bike for 30 minutes at least three times a week.

“We were very pleased, first and foremost, to see the safety,” said Dr. Christopher O’Connor, a Duke cardiologist who presented the study’s findings Tuesday during a meeting of the American Heart Association.

But there wasn’t a blockbuster finding that exercise is hugely beneficial to heart failure patients. Physical activity appears to offer no extra protection from overall hospitalizations or death, although it does result in a 15 percent lower risk of major cardiac events.

O’Connor said exercise might actually be more helpful than the findings indicate.

SEE HEART, PAGE 10A

HEART
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

because the study skewed care. Participants in the non-exercise group got intensive time and attention from doctors as part of the research, and some may have worked out on their own — factors that likely improved their health.

“In the real world, the lift [provided by exercise] will be higher,” O’Connor said.

Drop-off in exercise

Perhaps the biggest impediment facing the researchers was the drop-off in compliance among the exercise group. By the end of the study, only about half of those assigned to exercise were working out the minimum three times a week — a phenomenon among all heart patients that has long frustrated doctors.

“It’s a matter of changing behavior,” said Dr. Sidney Smith Jr., a cardiologist at UNC-Chapel Hill and past president of the American Heart Association. “People are quite willing to take a pill or have a procedure, but it’s another thing to get them to diet, stop smoking and exercise.”

Patients who adhered to the exercise program said they saw concrete results.

Kenny Jones, 51, said he never exercised before he suffered a massive heart attack in 2003. A golfer, Jones said that even riding a golf cart, he would get tired after playing nine holes. He started the Duke trial in 2005, and has worked up to one-hour sessions on the treadmill four days a week. Now, he said, he feels like he could walk 38 holes, carrying his bag.

“Oh wow, I have more stamina, more confidence, and I’m able to do more things,” said Jones, of Durham. “There’s really a lot of benefit in exercising.”

Smith, who was not involved in the study but heard the presentation Tuesday, said he sees improvement in his heart failure patients who exercise, and he ‘Oh wow, I have more stamina, more confidence, and I’m able to do more things.’

Kenny Jones
Heart Attack Survivor

recommends it. He said the study reinforces the growing perception among cardiologists that exercise is an inexpensive and effective therapy for nearly all people with cardiovascular disease.

And, Smith said, patient compliance might actually improve if the findings could influence the availability of insurance coverage.

“It would remove a barrier” to care, he said.

Lack of proof cited

Cardiac rehabilitation costs about $30 a session and includes doctor-guided exercise regimens, plus drug compliance counseling and other interventions. It has long been standard therapy after heart attacks.

In 2006, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, which oversees the federal government’s health insurance programs, expanded coverage to pay for cardiac rehab after heart valve repair, angioplasty and even heart-lung transplants. It explicitly ruled out coverage for heart failure, however, citing a lack of proof that it was necessary.

O’Connor said officials at CMS are aware of the heart failure trial, but no cost analysis of adding cardiac rehab coverage for heart failure has been conducted. A spokesman for CMS said Tuesday that current costs of cardiac rehab were not readily available, and the offices were closed for the Veterans Day holiday.

“Probably next spring we will set up a meeting and advocate for change,” O’Connor said.

sarah.avery@newsobserver.com
or 919-829-4882
Students facing discipline in racist graffiti incident

Robert McDonald, an N.C. State freshman from Charlotte, watches for reactions to his graffiti ‘Ashamed to be white,’ which he painted after four other students had painted threatening, racist graffiti about President-elect Obama.

STAFF PHOTO BY TAKAAKI IWABU

Four N.C. State University students who painted threatening, racist graffiti about President-elect Obama are facing possible discipline, NCSU Chancellor James L. Oblinger said Tuesday.

NCSU officials have not named the students, citing privacy concerns. However, Oblinger said that the four are being investigated for breaking university rules.

The students confessed last week that they had painted the graffiti in the Free Expression Tunnel on the NCSU campus. The U.S. Secret Service concluded there was no actual threat to Obama.

After campus police consulted with the Secret Service and the Wake District Attorney’s Office, university officials said the four wouldn’t be charged with any state or federal crime. They said the graffiti apparently wasn’t a hate crime under state law because it was in an area where graffiti is encouraged. They declined at the time, however, to say whether the students could face university discipline, for which expulsion is the most severe penalty.

About 500 people attended a rally Thursday at the NCSU Brickyard organized by the student government to demonstrate opposition to the graffiti. The graffiti appeared early Wednesday as modifications to positive messages about Obama that someone else had painted in the tunnel.

Staff writer Jay Price
Judd to keep promise

UNC-Chapel Hill students will have a famously devoted Wildcats fan sitting in their section when the Tar Heels host Kentucky next week.

On a campaign trip for Obama late last month, actress Ashley Judd promised students she would return to Chapel Hill for the basketball game — and sit in the student section — if Obama won North Carolina.

He did, and Judd's public relations firm said the star of "High Crimes" and "Kiss the Girls" plans to attend the Tuesday game.

No word on what shade of blue she'll be wearing.
College students ‘get away with’ poor preparation

By Mary Beth Marklein
USA TODAY

Nearly one in five college seniors and 25% of freshmen say they frequently come to class without completing readings or assignments, a national survey shows. And many of those students say they mostly still get A’s.

The survey doesn’t address whether those students are lazy, busy, intimidated, bored or geniuses. But it supports other studies that suggest a gap between what college professors expect from students and what students actually do.

“College learning is a two-way street,” says Indiana University associate professor Alexander McCormick, director of the National Survey of Student Engagement, which conducted the study. “The purpose here is not to dump on faculty, but when a substantial chunk of students come to class unprepared, it suggests that they can get away with it.”

The findings, out today, are based on surveys this spring of nearly 380,000 randomly selected freshmen and seniors at 722 four-year colleges. Participating schools generally reflect the diversity of U.S. higher education.

Colleges use the survey to help evaluate the quality of their undergraduate education. Among findings:

- Students report spending about 3½ hours a week preparing for each class. That’s about half what instructors expect from a typical student.
- 55% of seniors and 55% of freshmen said they frequently worked harder than they thought they could to meet an instructor’s standards.
- Of those who frequently didn’t do homework, 29% of freshmen and 36% of seniors got mostly A’s.

Those findings echo observations of Northern Arizona University anthropology professor Cathy Small, who spent a year living in a dorm and attending classes alongside freshmen as part of research for a 2005 book.

Many students cut corners as a way of managing the demands of student life, when “there were no consequences and no rewards for doing or not doing” homework, she says.

Small has since cut back on required reading and ties homework directly to discussions, quizzes or exams. “Part of accountability meant you created readings that were realistic in terms of the goals of the class.”
Transfer students can save money, graduate faster

By G. Jeffrey MacDonald
Special for USA TODAY

Twenty-one-year-old Dustin Oftedal has found a lot to like in the tiny desert town of Moses Lake, Wash., even since he transferred last winter from Yakima Community College to Central Washington University.

He’s on a CWU satellite campus where he can pursue a bachelor’s degree in flight technology and a pilot’s license at the same time. And he’s still just 100 miles from his fiancée in Yakima.

“It would have taken me two extra years” to do both programs separately, Oftedal says. “Cost was also a factor. . . . By doing it this way, I’m able to stay in this area.”

CWU’s shared campus with Big Bend Community College in Moses Lake reflects a type of partnership that bodes well for transfer students, a group that is typically less engaged than their peers, shows data from the National Survey of Student Engagement. Forty percent of those surveyed in 2008 were transfers. As tuitions soar, more students are opting to save thousands by starting at community colleges and later transferring to four-year institutions.

CWU is one of several schools where seniors who transferred say they are at least as academically engaged as their native classmates.

Sometimes supportive relationships begin even before the transfer happens. This fall, Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff launched a program that allows new students at nearby Coconino Community College to gain early admission to NAU, engage in intensive academic planning and get involved in clubs long before they arrive on campus.

Recruiters from Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas, visit five community colleges in East Texas at least once a month, even during the summer. Florida Gulf Coast University in Fort Myers stations a full-time admissions officer on the campus of nearby Edison State College, which supplies 65% of transfers.

Faculty members take initiative, too. Professors from Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio and Saint Ambrose University in Davenport, Iowa, lecture regularly at community colleges in their regions.

In contrast, the University of Hawaii at Manoa attracts more transfers from mainland schools than from local community colleges. Transfers often embrace academic challenge from the get-go, says Ronald Cambra, an assistant vice provost. That’s because they’ve come seeking expertise in particular fields. And because focused students are less likely to drop out, Cambra says, an advising center urges transfers to make decisions promptly.

Creating a transfer-friendly environment helps, too. At the University of La Verne in California, most transfers take classes on one of nine satellite campuses. They bond by enrolling in cohorts of 15 or 20 students who share a major. And they’re encouraged to draw on life experience when analyzing issues that professionals and organizations face.
ECU students design prototype wounded warrior barracks

JENNIFER HLAD  
November 6, 2008 - 7:15PM

As the Marine Corps and Camp Lejeune move forward with construction on a new barracks and care center for wounded warriors, some East Carolina University interior design students had the opportunity to offer their own insight for the project.

A handful of ECU students in the College of Human Ecology have spent most of the semester designing a wounded warrior barracks - creating plans for the space they would create if money was no object.

"We're dreaming about the barracks of the future," said Hunt McKinnon, a lecturer at ECU who oversaw the students' work and accompanied three of the students to Camp Lejeune on Wednesday to present the designs.

"I really like what I see," said Lt. Gen. Dennis Hejlik, commanding general of II Marine Expeditionary Force, as he looked over the mockups. "This is absolutely amazing."

The plans used what the students called "universal design" - spaces that are accessible to people with disabilities but don't look unusual. Designs included special considerations like a therapy pool, a sensory room and a home theater center with acoustics that would keep loud noises confined to the theater area.

Michelle Hamilton was one of the three students who presented the projects Wednesday at the Wounded Warriors barracks. Hamilton, a Marine Corps spouse, said she appreciated the chance to be able to give back to the injured Marines and sailors.

"Because of my experience, it is a lot more personal," Hamilton said - though sometimes it was hard not to get emotional.

Hamilton told Hejlik her group designed their project to feel like home, so the Marines and sailors would be comfortable.

Hejlik said it is a delicate balance.

"You want to help the Marine or sailor, but you don't want to coddle them," he said.

The project also was good academically, Hamilton said, because it gave the students a reason to look at how different design aspects work together to accommodate various needs.

"It is more than just picking out colors and curtains," she said.

Pete Grimes, command advisor for Wounded Warriors Battalion East, is a member of the
military affairs committee at ECU and said the idea for project "blossomed" over a three-year period.

Letting the students work on designs for the new barracks is helpful for the Marines and the students, he said.

"This is a real-life project," he said.

Hejlik praised the students' work and their efforts to improve the lives of wounded warriors.

"What you may not realize is this is your part in the global war on terror," he said. "I really appreciate it ... but the Marines will appreciate it even more."

Contact interactive content editor and military reporter Jennifer Hlad at jhlad@freedomenc.com or 910-219-8467.