



**Wilbur Schield**

## **Wilbur and Eileen Schield**

Since the mid 1930's, Wilbur and Eileen Schield have been inextricably linked to Anderson University. Meeting and then marrying in 1937 (1938), they come from families with long-term ties to the university and the Church of God. Wilbur's sister, Lura, was an alumni of the school and served many years as secretary to Dr. John Morrison, first president of Anderson University. Wilbur established a lasting memorial to his sister by establishing the Lura Mae Schield Reynolds Endowment Fund a few years ago.

Wilbur and Eileen have been donors since 1942. Through the years they have been a part of every significant giving program and project on campus. The primary campus dining room at the Olt Student Center bears their name as does a major wing of the Fine Arts Center. They have been recognized by both receiving the university's highest two awards: the Distinguished Heritage Award and the Business and Professional Association Distinguished Service Award. Wilbur has been further recognized by receiving an honorary Doctor of Laws degree and Trustee Emeritus status.

Wilbur has contributed his time in significant service to the university. He retired from the Board of Trustees after 30 years, serving most of that time on the prestigious Executive Committee. Wilbur helped form a trustee investment committee and serviced on it also until retirement. He volunteered a tremendous amount of additional time and resources helping monitor and direct investment activities ranging from a catfish farm in Mississippi to countless corporate stocks. Even after retirement from the Board of Trustees, he continued to help with a wood-products company investment in Mississippi, making countless trips to the company operations.

As donors, Wilbur and Eileen have always seemed to be in leadership roles. Wilbur was on the University's first major fund-raising committee in 1955 and 56 to construct the Charles E. Wilson Library. From this experience, Wilbur was motivated to work with President Morrison to form the Business and Professional Association. He along, with brother Vern, had recognized a need for drawing together a group of business and professional people into an organization that could be counted on for annual and project support to aid the school in its financial planning and development. This group was formally structured in 1957 and Wilbur served as its first president. Since that time, this organization has generated over \$25 million of financial support.

From Wilbur and Eileen's days on a campus of 80 students, the university has grown to an enrollment in excess of 2,200 students. Beyond the numbers, it is the investment in the lives of over 15,000 graduates that is truly lasting and most important. Wilbur and Eileen, we thank you for this treasure of immeasurable value you have helped to build at Anderson University

**Ronald Moore, Senior Vice President, Anderson University.**



**Wilbur Schield**

## Wilbur and Eileen Schield

I send my greetings to all the Schield clan that are gathered in Waverly, Iowa. It would be nice to be there and see the gang, but this is not possible. So, here are a few things I've put on tape about my friends of many years (and I mean many years) Wilbur and Eileen.

Tommy Rowe [A.T. Rowe's son], of course, comes to mind. He was a high school buddy of mine, along with Eileen, and we were involved in the Park Place Church of God youth activities together. We went to parties together, went down to Pendleton swimming together. Some of our activities were spiritual and others could be described somewhat differently. My father was pastor of the Park Place church. And at various times before our gang came on the scene, he had been a close friend and counselor to the Schield family children who had come to Anderson. I'm speaking now of Vern, Russell, Lura and Myrtle, who were all members of my dad's church and he knew them well. They found their way to what was the Anderson Bible Training School in the 1920's (and were talking here years ago now to prepare themselves for religious vocations. They were industrious people, self-supporting students, filled with religious zeal, eager to be used of God to restore a broken and divided church to its primitive strength and purity, which was the mission of the Church of God.

Now, when Wilbur, who was the last of the Schields to arrive on the Anderson scene in the early 1930s, the town was in the depths of the depression, jobs were scarce, the school was not called Anderson College and it was hanging by a financial thread. Remember that Lura, his sister, was President Morrison's secretary, so Wilbur enjoyed something of an inside track. And it was not long before he was sneaking out the old college truck to make calls on some of the farmers during weekends to gather up potatoes and all kinds of produce to pedal to mom and pop stores in the city.

Wilbur had a good eye for business and was bent on finding something that could be bought for a nickel, sold for a dime and was habit forming. Well, he came close. When I was in high school, I can recall when he'd purchased his own truck, and had a good wholesale business going. So, it was about this time that we began to see Wilbur & Eileen together, and before long they were married and building a house on Chestnut Street.

Now, no one who lived through the depression years will ever forget how the college community and the church community had pooled their meager resources to see that all of us youngsters had what we needed. We know what it is like to live in community and to be a part of its life—to give and to receive. At the college, the college truck roamed all around rural churches in northern Indiana picking up food, to keep the students alive. I recall one congregation that donated a truckload of sauerkraut which sort of permeated the campus with its' perfume for a week or two. And though the campus was struggling to keep alive, its president and faculty were living out its vital mission that proclaimed that learning and faith belong together. Wilbur and Eileen were very much part of this.

And so, when I returned to Anderson in the fall of 1947, to become the lowly assistant to the president, John Morrison (you might say his health had been failing) and I asked him what he wanted me to do. He said what he wanted me to do was everything I could do to help him finish out his years in office. Well, as I looked around, we needed everything. World War II vets were coming on in large numbers because of the GI Bill, so we turned to people like Wilbur and Eileen to help us. The idea of a

gathering of business leaders for support seemed a good idea, so when C. E. Wilson of General Motors fame came to town, Wilbur and a few others hosted a meeting at the old Anderson Hotel. And we gathered a few of our business leaders together. I remember Wilbur saying to me, "Bob, we need to develop an ongoing organization to get behind what we need to do here in the next 25 years." And so it was out of this conversation that Anderson College Business and Professional Association was formed [at a meeting in Wilbur and Eileen's home in Waverly]. Year after year it has brought in the financial resources that have played a central part in what is now Anderson University. And so, this organization (at a very, very critical time) really affected the lives of thousands of students.

During the 25 years, that followed while I was President, Wilbur and Eileen were both friends [and] confidants. Wilbur [was] a member of the board of Trustees for 20 years and I might say we did very well. We built 19 major buildings and saw the campus prosper. Now, to be truthful, I want to confess that I did manage to relieve Wilbur and Eileen of a goodly portion of their wealth. But it was great fun to do, even though at times it occasioned some pain. But it is a great father, like Wilbur, who can teach his family the joy and responsibility of good stewardship.

So, those of you in the Schield family come out of a great heritage and wonderful tradition:

- a heritage of the dignity of work,
- the importance of education,
- the heritage of sharing, and
- the heritage of partnership in the community of faith.

I rejoice and celebrate with you in that [heritage]. So, at this happy time when the clan gets together, Gerry [my wife] and I send along our love and best regards to you all.

**Bob Reardon, President of Anderson University: 1958-1985.**