



John and Paula Kelton

G. Jackson Burney Community Service Award Citation

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John and Paula Kelton moved to Davidson in 1959 and quickly immersed themselves in village life at many levels.

In the 1960s and 70s, Paula taught in the first public kindergarten in North Carolina. These pre-school classes met at the Child Development Center at the then-closed Ada Jenkins Elementary School. When the program ended, she taught at the integrated pre-school at the Davidson College Presbyterian Church. When the State established the first kindergarten at Davidson Elementary School in 1976, Paula Kelton taught its first eleven years.

Also in the '70s Paula led an integrated Girl Scout Troop at her church, taught Sunday school, and served in many church, college, and village events.

In the 1990s Paula worked voluntarily at the Ada Jenkins after-school program. Paula has left a positive, caring, and indelible mark on the community and on the lives of the many children she served so faithfully.

John Kelton's community service began in his student days before he returned to join Davidson College's Psychology Department.

In the fall of 1950, following "the fire that stopped the preacher," John, as YMCA treasurer, led a campus Christmas Gift Fund campaign that provided escrow funds to secure loans made for the construction of affordable housing in the Mock Circle area. Years later, with the loans sufficiently paid, these funds were returned to the College and used for scholarships to enable local African-American children to attend colleges of their choice.

In the 1960s John Kelton joined John Brandon, Ralph Gable, James Howard, Esther Johnston, Pat Sailstad, and Stella Torrence in operating a teen canteen at Davidson Presbyterian Church. In the 60s and 70s John and Paula, under the Danforth Associate Program, focused on the concerns of the many married students living in town and attending Davidson College.

John is a life member of the Davidson-Cornelius Day Care Center. He served as President from 1972-1974 at the time when the Center moved from funding by the Mecklenburg Department of Social Services to independent status. He is an Emeritus member of the Board of the Ada Jenkins Center which he served as Chairman of the Finance Committee and Chairman Development.

In the 1980s some members of the Davidson College Presbyterian Church envisioned a non-profit retirement community in Davidson. John chaired the Church's campaign with a target of \$750,000. Many thought the task impossible for a church numbering few more than four hundred members. More than \$800,000 raised—along with funds from a broader campaign—

provided the first seed money and enabled the project to move forward. John served on the original Pines Board and became its vice president.

In 1994 the Town, having money in hand to build the basic library on the Village Green, appointed a committee with John as chair to raise \$140,000 for such extras as its useful front porch. The great success of the campaign enabled the Town to place more than \$100,000 with Foundation for the Carolinas as an endowment for library needs in Davidson. John currently chairs the Library Endowment Committee, which allocates funds for items not covered by the library budget.

I shall pass over John's chairing the Department of Psychology, College Self Studies, and serving President Kuykendall as his executive assistant and as Director of the Office of Institutional Research, though in this position he assisted in the establishment of the McConnell development. No small contribution by both John and Paula to College and town was their involving the community in hosting international students when John chaired the College's Richardson International Students Program. Students, foreign or domestic, arriving at the College could have no warmer, no more gracious, no more hospitable reception into the Davidson community than that which the Keltons provided.

In all of this John's greatest accomplishments may have been his two years as President of Davidson Elementary PTA and his surviving almost fifty years of haircuts by James Raeford and Ken Norton.

For these reasons and more John and Paula Kelton fully merit the Town of Davidson's G. Jackson Burney Community Service Award for 2008.