

Celebrating a decade of achievement:

First Endowed Chair Goes To Women's Studies

The Woodward family has given the women's studies program a wonderful tenth birthday present, the largest single gift ever given to Simon Fraser.

Thanks to benefactors Mrs. Elizabeth Russ and Mrs. Mary Twigg White, daughters of Ruth Wynn Woodward, and many other donors, SFU has its first endowed chair — the Ruth Wynn Woodward Chair in Women's Studies.

"Women and their accomplishments have been neglected too long," says Mrs. White, in explaining her decision to support the SFU women's studies program. "The study of women's issues and concerns is long overdue."

The Woodward sisters are donating \$400,000 to help endow the chair. Combined with a \$500,000 challenge grant made a year ago by the federal secretary of state, and many other donors, the chair is close to the \$1,000,000 needed for the endowment.

Donors, faculty and guests attended the women's studies 10th anniversary celebrations at SFU in September.

"Women's studies has gone from being a passionately held idea and ideal to one of the most recognized programs in Canada," said Prof. Andrea Leibowitz, one of the program's founders.

"We believe women's studies fills in the gaps in the knowledge of traditional disciplines and revises the fundamental methods and questions of traditional areas of study," Leibowitz said.

"The research and teaching done at the university in women's studies will be returned to the community."

Psychiatrist Dr. Susan Penfold, the first



Ruth Wynn Woodward

and current appointment to the Ruth Wynn Woodward chair, is widely known for her work in the treatment of depression in women and the overuse of psychotropic drugs.

Well-known politician Dr. Rosemary Brown will continue the chair's community outreach when she succeeds Dr. Penfold in January.

Ruth Wynn Woodward was also an active community worker, and a pioneer B.C. cattle rancher and businesswoman.

Dr. Margaret Benston, coordinator of women's studies at SFU, says: "Ruth Wynn Woodward was one of British Columbia's outstanding pioneer women. Through a lifetime of public service and personal accomplishment, Mrs.

Woodward demonstrated the importance of the work of women to Canadian society."

Ruth Wynn Woodward was born in Vancouver in 1897 and died in 1972 at age 75. A self-described "rancher's daughter," she was raised on a ranch at Alkali Lake, near Williams Lake in the Cariboo region of B.C.

As a teenager, she was sent to Paris to learn French. With the outbreak of World War 1, she left France and worked in hospitals and canteens in England and Ireland.

She returned to the Alkali Lake ranch and within a few years married William Culham Woodward, son of the founder of Woodward Stores Ltd. They moved to Vancouver and had two daughters and a son, Charles.

From 1941 to '46, Mrs. Woodward was chatelaine of Government House in Victoria while her husband served as lieutenant governor.

Mrs. Woodward devoted much time and energy to community groups such as the Red Cross, St.

John's Ambulance, Community Chest (United Way), 4-H and Girl Guides. She also helped found the Vancouver General Hospital Women's Auxiliary and was a founding member of the Junior League of Vancouver.

After her husband's death in 1957, Mrs. Woodward served as a director and vice-president of Woodward Stores Ltd. and as president of Elmswood Ltd. She also bought and ran Woodwynn Farm at Saanichton on Vancouver Island where she raised show and commercial herds of Aberdeen Angus cattle.

Mrs. Woodward often used as a motto the expression: "It is the greatest of all mistakes to do nothing, because you can only do a little. Do what you can."