

HONORARY GRADUATE

Edward Pavitt

Edward Pavitt was born on 14 July 1918 in Vryburg in the Cape. He matriculated from Kingswood College, Grahamstown in 1935 and attended this university from 1936 to 1940, obtaining the degree of Bachelor of Science in Engineering in the branch of Mining and Metallurgy.

He joined the South African Engineering Corps in 1940 and served in North Africa and Italy with the 11th Field Company attached to the 8th Army, progressing to the rank of Major. He was discharged in 1946 with the Military Cross, having gained recognition as one of South Africa's more distinguished sappers, first of all as an engineer and secondly as an excellent and indeed exceptional soldier.

In 1946 Edward Pavitt joined Union Corporation Limited as a mining engineer on the East Rand. He rose to become General Manager of Leslie Gold Mines in 1961. In 1964 he became Consulting Engineer at the Head Office of Union Corporation, in 1967 Chief Consulting Engineer and in 1969 a director of Union Corporation, in 1970 Executive Director, in 1971 Assistant Managing Director, and in 1972 Managing Director. This is an exceptional record of personal achievement within the corporate world.

After the amalgamation of General Mining and Union Corporation he became Vice-Chairman of Gencor in 1980. In 1982 he was appointed Executive Chairman and in 1984 Chairman. He retired from that position in 1986. In addition to his career in Union Corporation and Gencor, he has held directorships in a wide range of major companies.

For all his involvement in the upper reaches of industry and commerce, Edward Pavitt has always made time to give expression to his deep concern for the well-being of the community at large. He has been Chairman of the Trustees of the South African chapter of the International Association of Commerce and Economics Students, a Council member and President of the South African Foundation, a Governor of the Urban Foundation, and a trustee of the Institute for Deaf and Blind and of the 1820 Settlers Association.

His involvement in tertiary education has been wide-ranging. In addition to his services to this university, he has been a member of the Council of the University of Port Elizabeth and of the Advisory Board of the Faculty of Engineering of the University of Pretoria, and has also been involved with the Vaal Triangle Technikon.

In his professional sphere, Edward Pavitt was elected the first Honorary President of the South African Institute of Mechanical Engineers and received the G R Bozzoli Award of the Faculty of Engineering of this university.

When the University expanded on to the newly acquired West Campus, it incurred major expenditure, including the refurbishing of a number of the old showground buildings. There was little prospect of erecting a new building, though one was very much needed for transferring Engineering to the West Campus. Edward Pavitt, by his personal and indefatigable efforts, opened doors and achieved what had seemed beyond our reach. The Chamber of Mines Engineering Building is in large measure a tribute to his vision and energy.

In 1987 he became a member of the Council of the University. His most important involvement in the affairs of the University has, however, been his contribution to the University Foundation. He became a trustee and member of the Foundation's Board of Governors in 1978 and in 1987 became Chairman of the

Board, succeeding Charles Skeen. Family circumstances now make it necessary for him to step down from the chairmanship.

As universities come under increasing pressure, so we need to generate moneys from other sources. The Foundation under Edward Pavitt's leadership and guidance, drawing on his own personal energies and his high standing in so wide a circle, has been a very important component in the fiscal planning of the University. Under his direction the Foundation has made enormous progress in providing the funds so necessary for both the general purposes of the University and for special projects.

The University takes great pleasure in conferring the highest distinction at its disposal on a man of quality who has made an enormous contribution to the mining industry, to tertiary education, to the broader community in need of a hand of help and friendship, and to his proud Alma Mater.