



Donald Reynolds, right, is greeted by Mitch Murch, past president of the MU Alumni Association, after the dedication of the alumni and visitor center, which Reynolds financed with a \$9 million donation. (David A. Pulliam photo)

# Alumni center opens

By MELANIE BRUBAKER  
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Amid thick carpets, art deco lamps, wood accents and music from a brass band, MU alumni and supporters gathered yesterday to honor the benefactor of the new Donald W. Reynolds Alumni and Visitor Center.

After the dedication of the center, history professor Haskell Monroe, who was chancellor when Reynolds made the donation in 1988, recalled being a bit nervous while soliciting one of MU's richest alumni for the university's biggest donation ever.

Former MU football player Guy Entsminger, who worked in development and relations, had told Monroe that former chancellor Barbara Uehling had approached Reynolds for a gift to the journalism school and had been turned down. Entsminger asked if MU should try again, and Monroe agreed, saying there was no harm in asking. Entsminger approached Reynolds, a 1927 journalism school alumnus, with a "laundry list" of needs on campus, and Rey-

## Reynolds honored for donation.

nolds liked the idea of a new alumni center. At a subsequent meeting with Reynolds, Entsminger and Monroe pitched their idea and asked for the \$9 million necessary for the project.

"He replied, 'I'd like to cooperate with you,'" Monroe said, adding that he wasn't sure what that meant.

An assistant leaned forward and asked Reynolds if he knew how much money he had just pledged to the university, and Reynolds replied, yes, \$900,000. When the assistant said they were talking about \$9 million, Reynolds replied, "Yeah, add another zero," Monroe said.

Reynolds amassed his fortune by starting as a newsboy and building the Donrey Media Group, one of the first news chains that focused on small and medium-size markets. He also has made dona-

tions to the journalism school, athletics and the first alumni center.

Yesterday, Entsminger said the building will serve as a new center of the campus. "It was right on this block that Mr. Reynolds did a lot of his socializing," Entsminger said, referring to the days when the two-block stretch of "Campus Town" was the home of numerous stores, grocers, and "The Shack," a famous hangout.

UM curator Sam Cook, also an alumnus, said when speaking about the campus, MU alumni "remember The Shack and Jesse Hall." The new center "sort of orients us in that direction."

Reynolds was on hand yesterday to cut a black ribbon with a giant pair of gold scissors, officially opening the new \$9 million center. At the end of the short ceremony, alumni sang their alma mater, "Old Missouri," accompanied by members of Marching Mizzou

dressed in gold lame jackets. Hundreds of guests then milled around the Columns Room and lounge, looking into offices and conference rooms named after college friends of Reynolds. The new building will provide office space for alumni, development and fund-raising offices.

Alumni came from around the country to attend the dedication. Harold Jordan of California said the center will be a hub for both alumni and student life. His wife, Martha, added that the "ambiance is mindboggling" in the lush building.

Carole Sue DeWatte, a local member of the alumni association, said the building will be an asset to the Columbia community, as well.

Brian Butler, an MU student who is a member of the Student Foundation, said he hopes the center will provide the impetus "for more money to come in to help students." Students from the foundation and other student organizations served as hosts and hostesses at yesterday's bash.