

White, Arnold Howard ^[1]

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by William S. Powell, 1996

27 Sept. 1920–28 June 1976

Arnold Howard White, newspaperman, was born in Burlington, the son of George Otis and Mamie Beckom White. After graduation from Burlington High School in 1937 he attended [Catawba College](#) ^[2], where he majored in English with a minor in sociology. There he headed the news bureau all four years, served as president of the freshman and sophomore classes, was editor of *The Pioneer* his senior year, and won a medal in journalism. He was graduated in 1941, and the same year, on 22 June, he married Mary Elizabeth Barger of Kannapolis. They had four children: Karen (1947), Connie (1948), Craig (1952), and Janet (1954).

Known as Howard, White became a carrier for the *Burlington Daily Times-News* at age twelve and worked his way upwards through jobs in the mail room, high school correspondent, and summer employment while in college. After receiving his degree he became a reporter and sports editor. Entering the navy in January 1943 as an ensign, he received indoctrination training at Princeton University, then served in the Pacific theater in New Guinea and the Philippines, earning three battle stars. He returned to the United States as editor of the Naval Harbor Defense magazine for the Chief of Naval Operations in Washington, D.C. He also wrote an operational manual before being released to inactive duty in 1945 as a senior lieutenant. At home in Burlington he became city editor of the newspaper in 1946, managing editor in 1955, and editor in 1963. In 1967 he was graduated from the Urban Policy Conference of the Brookings Institution at UNC-Charlotte.

Howard White was a member of the American Society of Newspaper Editors and of the News Media Administration of Justice Council of the Institute of Government. The Associated Press Club of North Carolina elected him president in January 1970. In July 1975 he was named president of the [North Carolina Press Association](#) ^[3], having previously served for four years as chairman of the association's legislative committee. In the latter position he was influential in securing passage by the General Assembly of "sunshine" laws clarifying the openness of public meetings.

In addition, he was a trustee of Catawba College and of the BurlingtonYMCA ^[4] and a member of the Alamance County Human Relations Council, School Advisory Committee of Burlington, and local library board. Catawba College awarded him an honorary doctor of letters degree. A member of the First Reformed United Church of Christ, he served as elder and deacon. He collaborated with Walter Whitaker in writing the *Centennial History of Alamance County* ^[5] (1949) and was the author of *Builders of Alamance* (1951), *Two Hours of History* (1957), a booklet on the [Battle of Alamance](#) ^[6], and *The Piedmont Crescent* (1967), a collection of editorial features.

Because of internal problems at the Burlington newspaper, White considered a college teaching position but instead became editor and general manager of the Kannapolis *Daily Independent* on 1 Mar. 1976. Three months later he died of a heart attack in Concord. He was buried in the cemetery at Shiloh United Church of Christ at Faith in [Rowan County](#) ^[7].

Educator Resources:

Grade 8: Open Government, Sunshine Laws, & the Freedom of Information Act. North Carolina Civic Education Consortium. <http://database.civics.unc.edu/files/2012/09/SunshineLaws.pdf> ^[8]

References:

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Catawba College alumni records.

Chapel Hill Newspaper, 29–30 June 1976.

Charlotte Observer, 1 July 1976.

Greensboro Daily News, 1 Feb., 7 Mar. 1976.

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Salisbury Evening Post, 23 Jan. 1970, 1 Feb. 1976, 29–30 (portrait) June 1976.

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