

American studies at the University of Minnesota, Martin earned a doctorate in medieval English at Duke.

But academia wasn't in his future.

In 1973, he joined a Charlotte bank called NCNB and became one of the platoon of visionaries that eventually built the company into Bank of America.

The bank pledged Martin's time and \$3 million to rebuild uptown Charlotte's Fourth Ward, once an affluent quadrant that had fallen on hard times. From that project, Martin helped form the bank's Community Development Corp., which launched an aggressive plan to revitalize uptown and other center cities.

"He passionately believed the bank could be used to make the world a better place," Dennis Rash, then head of the development arm, said in 2001.

Martin left banking in 1978 to raise money and head the college relations department at Queens College (now Queens University of Charlotte). Five years later, McColl was named CEO of the bank and lured Martin back.

Martin became McColl's top adviser and "idea man." McColl often called Martin the bank's conscience.

Martin constantly looked for ways to use the bank's money to improve communities the bank served.

Once when a junior college in Rock Hill needed money to get accredited, Martin got the bank to give it to the school. When Livingstone College in Salisbury wanted to build a student life center, Martin again got the bank to foot the bill.

As a school board member in the 1980s, he hatched an idea that became the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Educational Foundation. He and his wife, Joan, sent their three children to public schools.

He got the bank to put up \$500,000 for information about the burning of black churches that plagued the South in the late 1990s. He pushed McColl and others to hire minorities.

And in dozens of cities in the Carolinas and beyond where the bank does business, there are educational and housing programs that help the poor bearing Martin's influence and sense of justice. *ImaginOn*, the children's theater center and library, is named after Martin and his wife.

"There are a lot of things in the Carolinas that wouldn't have

kept their visit secret. McColl once said he called the hotel one day asking for Joe B. Martin. But a receptionist told him several rooms were registered to a Martin, but none with a first name or middle initial.

Before every merger, Martin coached McColl on his personal behavior and body language.

"Joe was the thinker in the crowd," McColl said. "He would coach me on what not to do and what not to say."

Even after Martin was diagnosed with ALS in 1994, he remained McColl's close adviser. But understanding his mortality, Martin began to take higher-profile stands for racial harmony and helping other ALS patients.

In 1997, Mecklenburg County's commissioners raised his ire after threatening to cut money to arts programs because a few members objected to plays with gay themes. Martin, McColl and others appeared before the board to voice their disgust.

"What in the name of heaven are you doing to this town?" Martin scolded, gamely pulling himself to the lectern from a wheelchair. "This debate is not about the arts, is it? ... This is about the power of government - and how some people can use it against

alphabet. He spent his days rattling off e-mails and, letter by letter, writing a book about overcoming his illness and a well-received novel set in South Carolina published in 2001. He was finishing a second novel when he died.

And he became a crusader for ALS patients.

In 1998, he and Jim Martin raised more than \$3 million - with the help of family and friends - to build the Carolinas Neuromuscular/ALS Center at Carolinas Medical Center.

In 2003, Martin declared he no longer had ALS, but was living with it. He and Joan began sending that message by the Internet and began raising money for technology that he said makes survival an option.

"He pushed leaders in the ALS community very hard to tell people that the disease was something that you lived with, not something you died from," said Bill Wood, senior pastor at First Presbyterian Church and a long-time friend.

In the end, Jim Martin believes his brother proved it. ALS patients typically live five years after diagnosis. Joe Martin lived nearly 12.

"ALS took all his motor nerves

Joe Martin

BORN: Dec. 1, 1940, in Winnsboro, S.C.

EDUCATION: Attended S.C. public schools. Graduated from Davidson College. He also received a master's degree in American studies at the University of Minnesota and a doctorate in medieval English at Duke University.

EMPLOYMENT: Martin worked at Davidson College and Duke University. Joined NCNB (now Bank of America) in 1973. Left in 1978 to take a position at Queens College as vice president for development and college relations. He returned to the bank five years later as former CEO Hugh McColl Jr.'s right-hand man.

RECOGNITIONS AND AWARDS: 2000, Echo Award Against Inference for promoting racial harmony; 2005, *ImaginOn*: The Joe & Joan Martin Center, the uptown children's library and theater complex, was opened; 2006, NAACP Legal Defense Fund's Humanitarian Award.

Memorable Words from Joe Martin

"As long as we believe it, racial harmony is the best we can hope for, not racial unity."

"We have made progress in economic terms, but not socially. I think we are too genteel to let it get much worse or better."

"I don't think I am courageous; I suppose people may think I am dying, and that may even be fair - I thought so for a while, too. But I think I am still living and the evidence suggests that I am!"

"I want you to understand, the paralyzed man you see is not who I am. 'Paralyzed' is something I have now been given to do, but it is