

DOCUMENTS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

**REPORT OF THE MEMORIAL RESOLUTION COMMITTEE FOR
ROBERT DALE BROOKS**

The special committee of the General Faculty to prepare a memorial resolution for Professor Emeritus Thomas Dale Brooks, Department of Radio-Television-Film, has filed with the secretary of the General Faculty the following report.



Alan W. Friedman, Secretary
General Faculty and Faculty Council
The University of Texas at Austin
Arthur J. Thaman and Wilhelmina Doré Thaman Professor of English and Comparative Literature

**IN MEMORIAM
ROBERT DALE BROOKS**

Robert Dale “Bob” Brooks, former Professor in the Department of Radio-Television-Film, died on May 3, 2017. Bob Brooks, who was born in Topeka, Kansas, on December 3, 1932, earned both a B.A. and an M.A. degree from the University of Kansas where he also started a lifelong career in radio broadcasting. After working in radio in Kansas and in California and serving in the Air Force, Bob completed his Ph.D. at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. While there, he also worked in broadcasting and pioneered work in multimedia instruction.

Bob Brooks joined the Department of Radio-Television-Film (RTF) at The University of Texas at Austin in 1968; his contributions to RTF spanned four decades. Indeed, Bob was one of the chief architects of the newly created Department, serving as Acting Chairman from 1972-73, and he designed one of the most distinctive production labs in the new CMA Building; “The Egg,” a two-story, all-white immersive environment and the first computer-programmed multi-media facility at UT Austin.

Bob’s own primary work was in television and radio production. He was involved in a wide range of documentaries and news programs during his career. He also worked in audio and sound design with interests that evolved throughout his career along with advances in audio and recording technology. In fact, Bob built and designed his own state-of-the-art digital recording studio after retiring from the University, where he spent a good deal of time in his later years. Another important aspect of Bob’s professional career was his announcing and voice work. For many years here in Austin, commercials on local radio and TV stations often featured his smooth and immediately recognizable baritone.

Of Bob’s many contributions to the Department of Radio-Television-Film, perhaps the most important and lasting was his creation of the course, Introduction to Image and Sound, which gave RTF students their first experiences in film, video, and audio production. That course remains, to this day, a cornerstone of the RTF major. Bob’s students in that course have gone on to become major figures in media entertainment, and many of his TAs are now professors and administrators in some of the top production programs in the United States.

As a colleague, Bob’s quiet demeanor and thoughtful consideration of issues made him an adviser to Department administrators, fellow teachers, researchers, and staff members. The same qualities informed his teaching at both undergraduate and graduate levels. Bob also served the Department in many key administrative roles, such as director of graduate studies, head of the television production area, and acting chair. He also oversaw the RTF internship program for many years, as it steadily grew along with the Department and production opportunities in Austin. Bob provided his trusted counsel to the deans and other administrators in the College of Communication, and his presence as Marshall for both the Department and the College at commencement became a long-standing tradition.

By the time of his retirement in 1999, Bob had become the unofficial curator of the Department's collective memory. His uncanny ability to recall – in that mellifluous radio voice of his – all of those who had been colleagues through the years, to note their specific interests as researchers and practitioners, was an invaluable resource as the Department grew and developed a widening range of specialties.

In his long career in Radio- Television -Film, a career that spanned the growth of the Department from its earliest years to its eventual stature as a world-class “film school,” Bob Brooks came to exemplify the very best of the Department. He was a committed teacher and researcher, a skilled administrator, an outstanding professional in his own field, and a generous and thoughtful colleague. His work in the Department of Radio-Television-Film, in the Moody College of Communication, and at The University of Texas at Austin enriched each and all of these institutions.

This memorial resolution was prepared by a special committee consisting of Professors Thomas G. Schatz (chair), Bill Mackie, and Horace Newcomb.

Distributed to the Dean of the Moody College of Communication on April 30, 2018, and posted under “Memorial Resolutions” at <https://wikis.utexas.edu/display/facultycouncil/Wiki+Home>.