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Speeches for the Dedication of the Brooks and Witt Maintenance Building

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Dedication of service bldg.
Nov. 5, 1982

R. U. BROOKS

RAY BROOKS WAS BORN IN TOPEKA AND EDUCATED IN THE HUTCHINSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS AFTER WHICH HE EARNED HIS BACHELOR AND MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREES FROM KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY, MAJORING IN ARCHITECTURAL ENGINEERING.

RAY WAS AN ARCHITECT IN TOPEKA AND HUTCHINSON BEFORE COMING TO FORT HAYS STATE AS A FACULTY MEMBER IN 1935. HE WAS REALLY OUR VERY FIRST ON-CAMPUS ARCHITECT AND JOINED US AS SUPERINTENDENT OF BUILDINGS AND PROFESSOR OF INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION.

NOT MANY PEOPLE KNOW THAT RAY WAS THE ARCHITECT FOR LEWIS FIELD STADIUM, AMONG OTHER CAMPUS BUILDINGS. HE AND PRESIDENT CLARENCE RARICK VISITED THE LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY STADIUM HOUSING PROJECT AND CAME HOME TO DESIGN A STADIUM WITH HOUSING FOR COLLEGE MEN. NOW KNOWN AS LEWIS FIELD PIONEERS, MANY OUTSTANDING YOUNG MEN ATTENDED SCHOOL HERE FOR MINIMAL FEES WHILE LIVING IN LEWIS FIELD STADIUM.

RAY WAS ACTIVE OFF AS WELL AS ON CAMPUS DURING HIS YEARS WITH US. HE WAS AWARDED THE BISHOP'S CROSS OF SERVICE AND SERVED AS TREASURER FOR HIS EPISCOPAL CHURCH. HE WAS ALSO A MEMBER OF THE HAYS MASONIC LODGE FOR 33 YEARS.

RAY HAD MANY ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO HIS CREDIT THAT I COULD MENTION, BUT IF HE WERE HERE TODAY, HE WOULD PROBABLY SAY, "LET'S GET ON WITH THE PROGRAM."

WE LOST RAY RATHER SUDDENLY IN JULY OF 1971. HIS WIFE TINA MAY IS WITH US TODAY. THEIR CHILDREN ARE JAMES AND BARBARA. I BELIEVE THAT JIM IS HERE TODAY WITH HIS FAMILY. *They also are here to-day.*

WE ARE PROUD TO NAME THIS SERVICE BUILDING AFTER RAYMOND U. BROOKS.

C. A. WITT

CLIFF WITT WORKED SIDE BY SIDE WITH RAY BROOKS FOR MANY YEARS. CLIFF WAS BORN IN KENDELVILLE, INDIANA, SERVED HIS COUNTRY AND EARNED THE PURPLE HEART IN WW I, AND CAME TO HAYS WITH HIS WIFE BLANCHE IN 1934, WHERE THEY STILL RESIDE. WE ARE GLAD TO HAVE THEM WITH US TODAY.

CLIFF IS FROM THE OLD SCHOOL. HE COMPLETED THE EIGHTH GRADE INsofar as FORMAL EDUCATION GOES, BUT HE MADE SUPER STRIDES WITH HIS LIFE. HE FIRST WORKED IN HAYS AS A CONTRACTOR AND HELPED TO BUILD CUSTER HALL AND CODY COMMONS. IT WAS THROUGH HIS WORK ON CAMPUS THAT THE ADMINISTRATION, PARTICULARLY PRESIDENT RARICK, RECOGNIZED CLIFF'S TALENTS AND PERSUADED HIM TO COME TO WORK HERE AS A MAINTENANCE ENGINEER.

WHEN HE FIRST JOINED US, OLD FORT HAYS SOUTHWEST OF THE CITY WAS STILL COLLEGE PROPERTY. IT MUST HAVE BEEN DIFFICULT FOR CLIFF AND HIS CREW BECAUSE DURING THE FIRST HALF OF HIS TENURE HERE, THE BUDGET FOR THE COLLEGE WAS SMALL, THE DUST BOWL AND DEPRESSION OF THE 1930'S WERE ALL TOO EVIDENT, WORLD WAR II CAME ALONG AND TOOK ITS TOLL IN IMMEASURABLE WAYS, AND THEN THE FLOOD OF 1951 DEVASTATED THE CAMPUS.

HOWEVER, THROUGH IT ALL CLIFF AND HIS CREWS HAD THIS INSTITUTION AND ITS FUTURE AT HEART FIRST AND FOREMOST, AS DID RAY BROOKS. THAT IS QUITE EVIDENT AS YOU LOOK ABOUT THE CAMPUS TODAY AND SEE THE BEAUTY AND CONSTRUCTION THAT THEY WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR.

CLIFF AND BLANCHE ARE THE PARENTS OF FOUR CHILDREN, TWO OF WHOM ARE LIVING--MARIAN IN TULSA AND LEROY IN WICHITA. A SON ROBERT WAS A FACULTY MEMBER HERE UNTIL HIS DEATH IN 1970. BOB'S WIFE GRACE IS PRESENTLY ON THE ENGLISH FACULTY.

CLIFF RETIRED FROM FHS IN 1964. WE ARE PROUD TO NAME OUR MAINTENANCE BUILDING FOR MR. C. A. WITT.