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In Memoriam: Dr. Alfred Robert Roberts, Academy Co-founder; Dr. Alfred Robert Roberts, Academy Co-founder

Mark Roberts

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In Memoriam Dr. Alfred Robert Roberts, Academy Co-founder

Al Roberts was born in Paterson, NJ, on April 20, 1929 and died on May 6, 2007 at the age of 77. He joined the U.S. Army and served in Korea, Germany, and Denmark. He married Susan Curtis on August 31, 1952, in Heidelberg, Germany. They were married for 54 years. They served as short-term missionaries in the Belgian Congo from 1962 until 1964. He obtained a Ph.D. in Accounting from the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa, and taught at the University of Missouri in Columbia and later at Georgia State University in Atlanta.

Dr. Roberts was a key member in the formation of the Academy of Accounting Historians and was voted a life member. He loved to learn and to teach, whether it was learning about hawks from his neighbor or discussing accounting theory with his friends and colleagues or discussing the fair tax with the local libertarian chapter or discussing anything with anybody at any place.

He took care of everyone and made everyone feel special. We'd like to think he is now with his daughter Catherine and his colleagues Norman Dressel and Joe Guy. (Catherine died at the age of five). He was an unassuming man who treated all he met equally, with dignity, respect, and common courtesy. He was the same person whether he was talking to the President of the University, the waitresses at Dolly's (his favorite restaurant), a colleague, a supervisor, or a clerk in a store.....he saw the good and the potential in everyone and always tried to make others reach their potential. He never preached his values to others.....he lived them out for all to see and emulate.

He was a modest, self-effacing man with a desert dry sense of humor. He would never want anyone to go to trouble on his account and in fact, if he were to walk in right now would be shocked that you had gathered here in

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his memory. He would probably ask “why are you all here?” and made a comment about not having anything better to do. In place of an urn or a vase, he would probably want his cremated remains placed in a Tupperware container.

He was a music lover with the most eclectic sense of taste – jazz, classical, show tunes, musicals, Jewish Klezmer, the Village People, pop, and rock.

He was always reading and thinking and asking questions and listening and learning and discussing. He had an insatiable appetite for learning and travel. He loved to examine issues

from differing perspectives. He never encountered a stranger, just unmet friends. He was a son, a brother, an uncle, a husband, a father, a neighbor, a friend, a missionary, a teacher, a professor, an accountant, a colleague, and...the title he liked best, a grandpa. He also loved his boxer, Duran, with whom he walked, traveled, and played. His “hairy half son” was the stealer of his children’s inheritance. He made a lasting impact on the lives of those he touched and will be missed and remembered.

My Dad’s last words to his wife before his surgery were “take care of the dog and pay the bills.”

Mark Roberts