



MEASURE OF RESPECT

Robert A. Paterson [Jan 23, 1926 – May 13, 2008] was born in Reno, Nevada and received his early education in the Reno public school system. During World War II, Bob served in the U.S. Navy. After a B.A. in Biology (1949) from the University of Nevada, an M.A. in Biological Sciences from Stanford (1952), and Ph.D. in Botany from the University of Michigan (1957), Bob served as Assistant and Associate Professor of Botany at the University of Maryland (1957-67). Most of us got to know Bob Paterson far better in his next job.

In 1967, Bob came to Virginia Tech as Professor and Biology Department Head. Over a span of just 12 years (1967-79), he hired about 30 new faculty, many of whom remain near the Tech campus today. Until his retirement in 1994, Bob served in many capacities as administrator and teacher. These included Associate Dean for Administration, Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies, Interim Dean for the College of Arts & Sciences, Director of the Center for the Study of Science & Society, and the Science and Technology Studies Graduate Program. Many of us knew Bob as a friend, in his capacity as a teacher of biology and botany, or as

a researcher in the taxonomy, ecology, and distribution of aquatic fungi. Much of that research was conducted at the University of Michigan Biological Station, University of Alaska, and Antarctica. Bob directed and completed degree programs for 13 Ph.D. students in Botany.

After retirement and during the last few years of his life, Bob Paterson frequently joined the retired biology faculty (OWLS) for their monthly lunches, many of the OWLS having been hired by him. We always enjoyed his sense of humor and company. The Department of Biological Sciences has established an endowment fund called The Robert and Marion Paterson Graduate Scholarship.

From Dr. Bruce Parker