



Resolution of Memorial Tribute -

In Memory of

Andrew Jay Johnson, III, PhD

1933 - 2019

Dr. Andrew Jay Johnson, III was born September 27, 1933 in Beaumont's Hotel Dieu to his loving parents Lois Harper Johnson and Andrew J. Johnson, Jr. His early education was spent primarily as a student of BISD, graduating Salutatorian of Beaumont High School Class of 1951. His first college experience was Beaumont's Lamar State College of Technology; but then on Andrew went to The University of Texas, graduating *Summa Cum Laude* in 1954 with a Bachelor of Arts in History. He earned two degrees from Indiana University: Master of Arts in History in 1955 and PhD in 1964. Moreover, in 1966 Dr. Johnson earned a second Master's Degree from Graduate Library School at The University of Chicago. In 1958, Andrew moved to Beaumont, joining the faculty of Lamar State College of Technology which in 1971 became Lamar University. At Lamar from 1958 – 1995, he taught History and served as Administrator, including being named Interim President. Besides his life at Lamar, Dr. Johnson was involved in the community, including membership in the Rotary Club of Beaumont since 1968 with perfect attendance for forty-eight of his almost fifty-one years. With History as his background, Rotarian Jay Johnson served as one of the Rotary Club of Beaumont's Historians on many occasions, especially giving many hours of time and attention to documenting its Centennial year in 2013. Jay believed in The Rotary Four-Way Test and modeled it in his professional career at Lamar and within his personal life. Dr. Andrew Jay Johnson, III, Educator, Leader, Rotarian, and Paul Harris Fellow +3, passed away June 2, 2019 at the age of eighty-five and is greatly missed by his fellow Rotarians and by so many more.



In looking back at the life of Dr. Andrew Jay Johnson, III, there were milestone years that are worth re-mentioning in the life of a historian. The year 1955 was important in the life of Andrew Johnson for these reasons:

- Completed his graduate work on *Origins of the Contract Clause in the Federal Constitution* earning his Master of Arts from Indiana University, Bloomington, IN;
- Began teaching Government and History at Schreiner Military Institute, Kerrville, TX where he also supervised the dormitory life of the young cadets who gave him the nickname “Mad Dog” Johnson. He would also in time serve Schreiner as Recruitment and Admissions Officer;
- Married Betty Holmes, his Beaumont High School sweetheart; and they would live to enjoy sixty-four anniversaries and watch their family, which included Laura and Letitia, grow into four generations;
- Began working on his doctoral dissertation, *Life and Constitutional Thought of Nathan Dane*, an endeavor that would take him nine years to complete, culminating in his PhD from Indiana University in 1964.

The year 1958 was also important in the life of Andrew Johnson. That is the year that he and Betty returned to Beaumont with daughter Laura and began working at Lamar where he would serve in academic and administrative leadership under six presidents from 1958 – 1995. His legacy on honor and leadership at Lamar was built over a period of almost forty years with the following titles:

- Faculty member in the History Department;
- Co-sponsor of Alpha Tau Omega Fraternity;
- Director of Library Sciences;
- Director of the Mary and John Gray Library;



- Vice President of Academic Affairs;
- Vice President for Administration and Planning;
- Executive Associate to the President;
- Vice President for Administration, Personnel and Student Services;
- Interim President of Lamar-Beaumont from 1984 – 1985;
- Vice President for Student and University Affairs;
- Assistant to the Chancellor;
- Interim President of Lamar-Orange; and
- Professor at Lamar-Beaumont in the History Department.

In August of 1995, Dr. Andrew J. Johnson, III retired from his long tenure with many roles and significant contributions to Lamar.

In addition to his many titles while at Lamar, Dr. Johnson is credited with the following:

- Writing two decadal Self Studies for the Southern Association of Schools and Colleges;
- Directing one Equal Employment Opportunity Program; and
- Directing one National Defense Education Act Institute.

And here are the firsts at Lamar that are attributed to Dr. Johnson:

- Introduced the Library of Congress Classification to the Lamar Library;
- Expanded the Lamar Library to become the Mary and John Gray Library;
- Hired the first woman at Lamar into an executive position who served as Associate Director of Mary and John Gray Library; and



- Organized Lamar's first Summer Travel Program and directed that program for twelve summers.

Dr. Johnson's impact on Lamar and his Lamar colleagues is captured in the following quotes:

- According to Dr. C. Robert "Bob" Kimble who had named Dr. Johnson Interim President of Lamar: *Andrew Johnson embodied Lamar. For the ten years I was president, he was committed to quietly advancing the university through his orderly and even-handed administrative competence, eschewing distractions and divisions. An ever reliable and devoted teammate, Andrew was an admirable colleague and has for over thirty years remained a close personal friend. He is missed.*
- According to W. S. "Bud" Leonard, who served as Vice President and Vice Chancellor alongside Dr. Johnson: *Andrew was a low-key leader. He led by example, always the first to be a peacemaker, to challenge thoughts and put his experience to use. I found him to be upfront, truthful and supportive of all those things you want a colleague to be. He was a wonderful colleague, a wonderful gentleman, a fine ex-student of Lamar University as well as a wonderful administrator. I can't say enough nice things; he was a wonderful friend to me.*

Besides fulltime responsibilities at Lamar for almost forty years and involvement in the Rotary Club of Beaumont for more than fifty years, the following non-profits were important to Dr. Johnson and were, therefore, also significantly impacted by him:

- Beaumont Library Commission 1966 – 1969;
- St. Stephen's Episcopal Church Vestry 1967 – 1973;
- All Saints Episcopal School Board for thirty-five years, Chairman 1974 – 1975;



- Edison Plaza Museum Board 1985 – 1989;
- Southeast Texas Arts Council; Chairman 1989;
- Jefferson County Historical Commission 1976 – 1989;
- The Moody Foundation of Galveston 1973 – 1983;
- United Appeals of Beaumont: Budget and Admissions Committee 1970 – 1978 and Chairman 1974 – 1975;
- Gulf Coast Historical Society: Editorial Committee 1965 – 1968 and Vice President 1976 – 1978;
- American Heart Association Beaumont Chapter: Chairman 1971 – 1972;
- Beaumont Sesquicentennial Committee: City Chairman 1984 – 1986;
- Tyrrell Historical Library Association: Chairman 2003 – 2004; and
- St. Mark's Thursday Morning Prayer Fellowship which he attended for approximately thirty years, from 1998 until March 2019.

Important to Andrew Johnson were his hobbies, reading and travel; but most important to him was his family. He loved the titles that only his family could give him: husband, father, father-in-law, grandfather, and great-grandfather. More important, he loved each member of his family and especially appreciated the sacrifices that wife Betty and daughters Laura and Letitia made when he was earning his doctorate.

During the nine-year period, 1955 – 1964, while Andrew was husband, father, and teacher, he was also being driven to read and to understand and to write as much as he could about American lawyer and statesman Nathan Dane (1752 – 1835) who had been on the Continental Congress and had been a prolific writer about American Law. That experience of delving into the legacy of



Nathan Dane was important to Historian Andrew Johnson even beyond adding PhD to his name, which was the culmination of setting a goal and doing all that it took to turn his dream into reality. His family had learned so much from Andrew while supporting him and being with him along those long steps that after Andrew had his PhD, his wife and daughters set their own educational goals and accomplished their own dreams. Andrew's family had been proud of him, but he was proud of Betty when she went back to college to earn Masters in Bio-Chemistry; and he was proud of the research that she did for over thirty years with University of Texas Medical Branch. He was proud of Laura and Letitia for successfully earning doctorates: Laura's dream of becoming Professor and Letitia's dream of becoming first Lawyer, then Judge.

Research and writing were how Andrew filled his summers and spare time at Schreiner Military Institute and those first years, especially the summers, when at Lamar. And, when he completed it in 1964, he had reached the goal that he had set. He had earned his PhD. But *Life and Constitutional Thought of Nathan Dane* would provide a surprise for Dr. Johnson. He had no idea that years after his dissertation was bound and defended that he would receive notice that his doctoral dissertation was selected one of the five most outstanding dissertations written on the history of the U.S. Constitution between years 1950 and 1975. The five selected scholarly dissertations were published into one volume which included *Life and Constitutional Thought of Nathan Dane* by Dr. Andrew Jay Johnson, III, of Beaumont, TX. There is no way of telling how many students of law have already studied his dissertation or how many more will. The impact of Dr. Johnson's doctoral research and dissertation is ongoing and immeasurable.





Dr. Andrew Jay Johnson, III, was preceded in death by his parents, Lois Harper Johnson and Andrew J. Johnson, Jr.

He is survived by his loving family: wife Betty Holmes Johnson; daughter Dr. Laura Johnson Stafford and her husband Dr. Ben Stafford; granddaughter Dr. Lauren Stafford Richardson and her husband Alex Richardson; daughter Judge Letitia Johnson Farnie and her husband Dr. Mark Farnie; grandsons Jay Michael Farnie; grandson Robert Andrew Farnie and his partner Patricia Thornton; great-granddaughter Micaela Farnie and great-grandson Theodore Richard Farnie.

Jay is not only missed by his beloved, loving and adoring family of four generations, he is also missed by almost four decades of Students, Faculty, and Administrators at Lamar University and by more than five decades of Membership, Leadership, and Executive Directors of the Rotary Club of Beaumont.

Now, Therefore, Be it Resolved that the members of the Rotary Club of Beaumont express sorrow at the passing of their friend and mentor whether they addressed him as Andrew or Jay or "Mad Dog" Johnson or Dr. Andrew Jay Johnson, III. Fellow Rotarians saw Jay's dedication to Rotary as evidenced by his participation and having perfect attendance for the last forty-eight years of his life. Jay included Rotary meetings during his travels and made certain that he made up whatever was needed when he was "Nanny Andy" to his Pearland grandsons and later when he was faced with health issues. Of note is that Jay Johnson was so devoted to Rotary and the Rotary Four-Way Test and so proud of his membership in the Rotary Club of Beaumont that he was buried wearing his Rotary pin. Jay shared his sweetness as a gentleman, his sense of humor, his educational experience, and his loyal






leadership with Rotarians and so many more. Dr. Andrew Jay Johnson, III, has left an honorable legacy which is remembered by the people he touched and the institutions that he served, especially Lamar University and the Rotary Club of Beaumont.


And, Be it Further Resolved that this resolution is spread across the minutes of this Rotary Club and that copies be furnished to his family, to Lamar University, to Schreiner University (formerly Schreiner Military Institute), and to the Tyrrell Historical Library.

Passed by unanimous vote of the membership this the 16th day of June, 2021.

Approved:



Cindy Cherry
President



Cynthia A. Wolf, Chair
Resolutions & Memorials Committee

Attest:


Jay Wilson, Jr.
Secretary



Jacquie Chapman
Executive Director

