



Richard S. Brooks
1910-1989
Inducted 2001

Richard Sinclair Brooks was born September 24, 1910 in Austin, Texas. He was the youngest son of Victor Lee Brooks, Sr. and Grace Harrison Brooks. His father was an attorney in Austin and had served as a State District Judge. Brooks graduated from Austin High School in 1927 and attended the University of Texas. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree, Magna Cum Laude, in 1931 and his Master of Arts in 1933. He was named to Phi Beta Kappa in his junior year.

Brooks married Annie May Kress on April 4, 1935. That summer he entered the University of Texas Law School. Upon graduation in 1937, Brooks served as an assistant attorney general and practiced law with his older brother, Henry, before moving to Midland in 1941.

Brooks joined the Midland law firm of Whitaker, Turpin and Perkins. His first important assignment was as legal counsel for Humble Oil Company. He also began assisting Mr. Ed Whitaker with a client of his, the Faskens, a family who owned a vast amount of land in the Permian Basin, but lived in California. In 1946, with the semi-retirement of Whitaker, Brooks was given primary responsibility of the Fasken account.

In 1953, Brooks and Whitaker formed their own firm, taking the Fasken account with them. Over the years, Brooks became not only a legal advisor for the Faskens, but a general manager, overseeing the development of their vast properties.

In 1944, oil was discovered on Fasken property. Brooks recognized the potential for oil and gas development and developed a plan to reduce risks and taxes, while enhancing revenues. Mineral interests were sold in exchange for working interests. With this plan, the Faskens were eventually able to drill their own wells. Brooks also began to handle the leasing of Fasken land, making the Faskens true independent operators.

Brooks built a unique organization for the Faskens, out-sourcing operations, while overseeing the development of the company. His creative thinking and leadership saw the successful completion of the Morrow gas play in Southeastern New Mexico and the discovery and unitization of the Hanford San Andres Field in Gaines County.

Brooks had a long association with the Permian Basin oil and gas industry. His innovative management skills, his successful application of new technologies and his reputation for tough but fair dealings turned a land-rich, but cash poor entity into one of the foremost independent oil, gas and ranching operations in the Permian Basin.