

Honorary Alumnus / Alumna

Richard W. Smith

Incredible professors make indelible imprints on the lives of their students. Ohio Wesleyan University Professor Emeritus of History Richard W. Smith exemplifies both a thirst for lifelong learning and an intense desire and talent for teaching.

Dr. Richard W. Smith became a member of the University's faculty in 1950 and retired in 1986. A graduate of DePauw University, he received his A.M. degree from Harvard University and his Ph.D. degree from The Ohio State University; his academic field of specialization was the Middle Period of American history (1815-1877). In 1964, he was invited by Miami University to teach American history during the University's summer session; in the summer of 1966, he taught at the NDEA Teacher's Institute at the College of Wooster; and in the summer of 1968, he was invited to teach at the graduate school at The Ohio State University. In 1975, Dr. Smith was the recipient of the Bishop Herbert Welch Meritorious Teaching Award, Ohio Wesleyan's highest teaching honor.

Dr. Smith became a member of numerous professional organizations and honorary societies, including Phi Beta Kappa, Pi Sigma Alpha (political science), Phi Alpha Theta (history), American Historical Association, the Organization of American Historians, the Southern Historical Association, the Ohio Historical Society, the New York Historical Association and the Ohio Academy of History, of which he was president during 1970-1971.

Dr. Smith has been an active proponent of the importance of teaching history from the first time he stepped onto campus as a professor to his current role as Ohio Wesleyan University emeritus professor. As a testament to his ability to inspire students to join in his lifelong journey of learning, no fewer than eighteen of his former students have continued their education through the doctoral level in various fields. To this end and to show their great love and admiration for their former professor, The Richard W. Smith Endowed Fund was created in his honor. The fund was first envisioned by Dr. Evan Bukey, class of 1962, Professor of History at the University of Arkansas. He joined forces with Evan R. Corns, class of 1959 and Lloyd Ferguson, class of 1962, to launch the project, which has established *The Richard W. Smith Civil War History Lecture Series*. As Dr. Bukey states, "The institutionalization of The Richard W. Smith Endowed Fund will stand as a lasting tribute to a professor who has inspired innumerable individuals to strive for excellence in their lives and careers. The fund will ensure that future generations of Ohio Wesleyan University students may grasp why the Civil War remains both the single great event in our history and a past that will not go away. It will help them understand why even today our societal problems cannot be addressed without a thorough knowledge of what Abraham Lincoln called 'this terrible war.'"

Therefore, with friendship, affection and the deepest regard, we extend to you, Dr. Richard W. Smith, the designation of honorary alumnus of Ohio Wesleyan University.

14 May 2005

