



## David Dobbs Britt

May 20, 1936 - June 7, 2025

David Dobbs Britt, 89, died unexpectedly in Roanoke, Virginia on Saturday, June 7, 2025.

Just the previous week, he had completed a road trip to Ohio to celebrate his granddaughter, Lindsey, and Ben's wedding and was surrounded by members of his family. He extended his visit to Indiana and enjoyed an afternoon boating on the lake followed by a pizza party at the home of his granddaughter, Lauren, and her husband, Alex.

David was born in Wiggins, Mississippi on May 20, 1936. He married Mary Hart Richardson on October 23, 1965 in Roanoke, Virginia. She preceded him in death on September 8, 2015.

He went to Wake Forest University for a B.A. and then on to Emory University in Atlanta for a PhD. He first taught in the Humanities Department at Morehouse College in 1961 (when Martin Luther King Jr. was a visiting lecturer there), and became chairman of that department just two years later. Stops at Wabash College in Indiana and at the University of Wisconsin brought teacher of the year awards, more department head positions, and a postdoctoral fellowship in Black Studies.

David became a Hokie in 1976 when he and Mary moved to an 1860's farm

house in Riner, Virginia to teach English at Virginia Tech until, several years later, a unique opportunity presented itself to lead work at the Reynolds Homestead in Patrick County, Virginia. David and Mary worked together to create new programming for the community including the arts, literature, music, educational programming, and travel abroad. In the early 1980's, David took special pride in organizing the first computer camps for kids in the area when personal computers were just becoming common. David and Mary returned to Blacksburg in 1999 to teach English at Virginia Tech for several years before retiring.

David had very recently moved to Hermitage in Roanoke, where he had quickly found great new friends, a caring staff, rich programming, and an active beehive that brought back many memories of the family's time in Riner VA at the farmhouse.

David focused on building friendships while dedicating time to advocating for civil rights, lobbying for what he thought was best for his community, and improving his tennis game. Known for his sense of humor, David took great joy in telling long and elaborate jokes which usually resulted in laughter but also the occasional "David, David, David!"

He is survived by his son, Tim (Leigh) Britt of Columbus, Indiana, his brother, Robin (Susie) Britt of Greensboro, North Carolina, granddaughters Lindsey (Ben) Rees of Cincinnati, Ohio and Lauren (Alex) LaRose of Bloomington, Indiana, and numerous nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Mary, and sister Bubbles Marlowe.

The family will receive friends at McCoy's Funeral Home, 150 Country Club Rd SW in Blacksburg on Saturday, July 12th from 1 - 2pm. Funeral services will follow at 2pm with Pastor John Tadlock officiating. There will be a

reception afterward at David's favorite restaurant, Lefty's, until 5pm at 1410 S. Main St., Blacksburg. In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts may be made to Doctors Without Borders at <https://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/> or your favorite charity.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JUL 12. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (ET)

McCoy Funeral Home  
150 Country Club Dr. S.W.  
Blacksburg, VA 24060  
(540) 552-3211  
mccoyfuneralhome@verizon.net  
<https://mccoyfuneralhome.com>

## Funeral Service

JUL 12. 2:00 PM (ET)

McCoy Funeral Home Chapel  
150 Country Club Dr S.W.  
Blacksburg, VA 24060

# Tribute Wall

SD

“ Dr. Britt took a chance and hired me in 2000 for a position in UOIP at VT based only on a reference from a former friend/co-worker he knew. He actually met me on the VT drillfield with my offer letter. While our working time together was short, it still left a lasting impression on me. He was such a delight and an overall great person. My condolences to the entire family on the loss of your loved one.

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**Shannon C. Dove** - August 10, 2025 at 05:04 PM

CW

“ David shopped in the Kroger on South Main where I worked for many years. He was always so sweet to me and genuinely interested in how I was doing. I remember being so thankful that I got to see him one last time on what was my last day working there. My condolences to his family as he really was one of the kindest souls I have ever met.  
Crystal Wharton

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**Crystal Wharton** - July 12, 2025 at 04:01 PM

TP

“ From Marge and Travis Poole - Travis knew David in his days at the farm in Southside Virginia. Became reacquainted in Blacksburg after marrying a good friend of Mary and David - Marge Bond she was before the marriage. Really enjoyed getting to know them both and became good friends with many occasions as memories.

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**Travis Poole** - July 12, 2025 at 01:55 PM

CH

“ *Cathy H lit a candle in memory of David Dobbs Britt*



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**Cathy H** - July 11, 2025 at 05:40 PM

TR

“ *Our deepest sympathies, Tim and Leigh. We are very grateful that we had the opportunity to meet David before his passing. He was a remarkable man. We are saddened that we cannot attend the funeral services but we will be thinking of you both. --Tim and Vicki*

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**Tim Rees** - July 08, 2025 at 06:59 PM

PF

“ *David was one of the most kind people I have ever met. David was a founding member of the Montgomery Co. Dailoge on Race Steering Committee helping to eliminate racism. David bought so much to this community his wonderful since of humor and big warm smile will be greatly missed by myself and so many others. We Love You David.*

*Penny Franklin*

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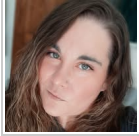
**Penny J Franklin** - June 25, 2025 at 08:08 PM

DR

“ *Dave was the best teacher I had at Wabash. He made literature come alive and tied it to the late 1960s upheaval in the country. I carried the lessons I learned from him during my long career in journalism. I was forever in his debt. My sincerest condolences to the family of this fine man.*

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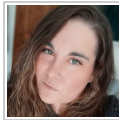
**Dean Reynolds** - June 22, 2025 at 01:12 PM



“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



**Bethany Marlowe** - June 16, 2025 at 11:18 PM



*My dad, Tim Marlowe, at their wedding if I'm not mistaken.*

**Bethany Marlowe** - June 16, 2025 at 11:21 PM

JH

“ *I first met David about 1974 or 1975. I was a freshman at VT and was hitchhiking from campus back to Christiansburg where I lived and David picked me up. That was the start of a friendship of many years. As we talked we discovered a mutual acquaintance in Buddy Pendleton, the legendary fiddler from Patrick County which sealed the deal. David was instantly likeable and congenial, just what a foot-weary hitchhiker hopes to encounter. Later I met his wife Mary and became appreciative of her equally warm and affectionate spirit.*

*Jack Hinshelwood*

**Jack Hinshelwood** - June 16, 2025 at 05:27 PM

SD

“ 1 file added to the album David Britt



**Sarah Durm** - June 16, 2025 at 09:57 AM