

LEROY HENRY FISCHER



LeRoy Henry Fischer was born May 19, 1917 in Hoffman, Illinois, the son of Dr. Andrew Leroy and Effie Risby Fischer. He died March 11, 2014 at age 96 in Stillwater, Oklahoma.

LeRoy attended a one-room school in Hoffman and graduated from Centralia, Illinois High School. He developed a life-long interest in history when he accompanied his parents to his father's medical conventions which were held in historic American cities.

After earning a PhD in history from the University of Illinois, he immediately went into the U.S. Army Signal Corps during WWII. He worked as a crypto-analysis in Operation Ultra Secret. He helped decode wireless German Enigma messages for the Allies at Bletchley, England for two years, four months and twenty one days. Following the war, he taught at Ithaca College in New York state before coming to Oklahoma State University in 1946. He taught at OSU for 38 years specializing in American History and the Civil War in the Indian Territory. His graduate students were very special to him. He retired as the Oppenheim Professor of History.

He was an early champion for historic preservation, especially for his beloved Old Central and Honey Springs Battle Field. The Honey Spring Battle Field Park visitor's center is named in his honor.

LeRoy was active in the Oklahoma Historical Society, serving on the Board of Directors for 43 years. He was Chairman of the Board at Stillwater First United Methodist Church, served on the YMCA Board and was active on the Oklahoma Historic Preservation Committee.

Among his honors were OSU teacher of the Year, Centralia, Illinois Hall of Fame, Oklahoma Higher Education hall of Fame, Oklahoma Historians Hall of Fame and Distinguished Service Award by the Oklahoma Heritage Association.

On June 20, 1948, LeRoy married Martha Gwendolyn Anderson in Stanton, Iowa. Martha and LeRoy's marriage was blessed with three children, Barbara, Jim and wife Vickie and John. They are reported to be the most wonderful children in the whole wide world. Five exceptionally brilliant grandchildren survive LeRoy; David, Andrew and Elizabeth McCrary along with Rob and Brent Fischer.