

IMAGES

...THEN AND NOW

From the Indian Hill Historical Society



Buckingham Lodge
1861

Remembering Bob Brumfield

For about 14 years, Bob Brumfield informed and entertained local people with his columns in the *Cincinnati Enquirer*. His humor and opinions on matters ranging from politics to opera were immensely popular and elicited many letters to the editor. Folks would stop each other on downtown streets and inquire “Have you read Brumfield today?”

A native of Hopkinsville, Kentucky, which he referred to as “Hoptown,” he graduated from high school in 1943 and enlisted in the Army Air Force. During World War II he was a B-29 bombardier with the 20th Air Force and was involved in the Central Pacific Campaign and the air offensive against Japan. For the rest of his life, he was an aviation enthusiast and collected books about flying and military history.

After the war, Brumfield graduated from the University of Kentucky in 1951, majoring in journalism. He was recalled briefly to the Air Force Reserve during the Korean War. He was employed as an advertising executive for the *Louisville Courier Journal*, then as a salesman for Colgate Palmolive Co., and later for several television stations. These included being news editor for WSAZ in Huntington, WV, reporter for WTUJ in Miami, FL, and news director locally for WKRC TV and radio.

In 1964 Bob joined the *Enquirer* as copy editor and started his opinion/editorial column in 1968. At first, he reported the weather, adding jokes and comments. Predictions ranged from “fall has fallen” to “kind of crummy.” He wrote four columns a week. His title was sometimes “columnist” and sometimes “aviation writer” allowing him to opine about assorted topics, including Shakespeare, baseball, the Patty Hearst affair, fluoridated water, bureaucratic agencies (EPA & OSHA), and the cicada infestation. He made up anecdotes about a crazy cat named Floyd and an attack roach named Attila. He fantasized about being Sir Robert of Brumfield in Great Britain for one week, and the next week he would make fun of his Kentucky upbringing. Several times he referred to himself as Caesar Robertus, Emperor of Mt. Adams, member of the Mt. Adams Army of Liberation and Enlightenment.

His colleagues praised the man they knew as “Brummie”. They called him a lovable curmudgeon, a first-rate stylist, humorist, satirist, and a sensitive super-creative guy. His wit and outspokenness were memorable. One reporter said, “Sometimes I loved the man, sometimes I hated him; but I always read him.” Another stated, “As I see it, many people disagree with his views. I can say that I do not 100% agree, but I respect him for having the guts to say what is on his mind.”

His readers were loyal. He was funny, sometimes argumentative, and irascible. Bob was an original: a man of many moods, interests, and talents. When he undertook a topic or new interest, he researched it thoroughly – whether it was for his column or one of his hobbies (among which were restoring antique cars and carving duck decoys). He participated in civic and community projects. Brumfield was an auctioneer for Channel 48’s Action Auction; he provided a recipe for Cincinnati’s *Celebrity Cookbook*; and he distributed silver maple tree saplings on Arbor Day at Fountain Square.



In 1976 Brumfield moved to Indian Hill. The *Enquirer* reported that the bachelor had “left his longtime nest atop Mt. Adams... so he could find a place to park.” (chuckle intended) In 1980, Bob published a 160-page book, *Brumfield*, compiled of the columns he most enjoyed writing. The Ohioana Library Association later honored the volume. Soon after Bob Brumfield, age 56, died of natural causes at his home, 8125 Spooky Hollow Road, on November 28, 1981. He was remembered as a witty, talented, multi-faceted man and an influential writer.

