



HUBERT J. DAVIS
1904-1997

Hubert J. Davis, retired educator with an outstanding professional career in teaching, as a supervisor in science education, an honorary life member of the Virginia Academy of Science and first director of the Virginia Junior Academy of Science (VJAS) died August 1997.

Davis was a pioneer in many efforts to promote science in Virginia, particularly in its schools. As chairman of the Virginia Junior Academy of Science Committee of the Virginia Academy of Science (1938-48), the first meetings were organized and held by the Junior Academy. These were among the first in the nation.

He was the first science supervisor in the state in 1945. While on the staff of the department of biology at the College of William and Mary during World War II, Davis helped promote and plan the educational program for the Virginia Marine Laboratory. This was the first and only service where exhibits and educational programs were carried into the schools. The NASA Spacemobile and Atomic Energy Commission's programs have been developed along the lines initiated by Davis and his colleagues in the early 1940's. As the science supervisor for Norfolk County Public Schools in 1946, he pioneered the idea of distributing teaching kits with live animals to schools; he held the first workshop for teachers on atomic energy in Portsmouth in 1948 at Wilson High School; and, with Bob Kelly, he helped develop the first Tidewater Science Fair.

A native of Richlands, Va., Davis earned his undergraduate degree from Emory & Henry (1926), and obtained his master's in 1940 from George Peabody College for Teachers in Nashville, Tennessee. He was high school teacher in Wise and

Tazewell counties acting as head of the science department at Coeburn High, principal at Cedar Bluff Jr. High. He then served as head of the department of science and assistant principal at Pochontas High School (1932-40) and as department head at Matthew Whaley High School in Williamsburg (1940-43).

While at Pochontas, in 1937, he was among the first to integrate sex education with high school biology. After he moved east to head the science program at Mathew Whaley High School in Williamsburg, he went to work at the College of William & Mary, where he began to develop science programs and materials for public schools, an idea later adopted by other agencies. Davis rose to the position of assistant professor in biology at William and Mary (1943-45). At the college he was director of the Virginia Fisheries Laboratory Educational Program.

He left Virginia for the first time in his educational career to become assistant professor of education at Mississippi State College in Starkville, where he taught courses in education, science, and audio-visual education (1951-53). The U.S. State Department called for Davis' services for 100 days as special representative in Germany. Upon his return he assumed the position of educational and training assistant at Indiantown Gap Military Reservation in Pennsylvania.

There followed a three-year stint as general supervisor with the Fredericksburg city schools and then a return to Portsmouth as general supervisor of the public schools, with his work primarily in the area of science (1956-67).

In 1967 he became staff science consultant for the Hampton Roads Educational Television Association-WHRO-TV, Channel 15. He retired from this full-time position in 1969.

Davis earned distinguished service awards from the Virginia Junior Academy in 1969, and from Emory & Henry in 1979. He was named a Fellow of the Virginia Academy of Science in 1982 in recognition of his inspirational teaching of science.

He conducted summer workshops at numerous universities and colleges and at the marine laboratories in Biloxi, Mississippi and Yorktown, Va. He taught extension classes in the Tidewater area for William and Mary and the University of Virginia.

He was the recipient of a Shell Oil Co. fellowship in 1961 for summer study at Cornell University and an NSF fellowship in 1963 for a summer seminar in sciences at the University of Colorado.

Davis has been a prolific writer in the fields of science, marine life, education, and audio-visual education. One of his top published works is the book, *The Great Dismal Swamp: Its History, Science and Folklore*, 1962.

Working with the State Department of Education, he developed educational motion pictures on *The Field Trip*, *The Virginia Oyster*, *Teaching Materials Center*, and *The Great Dismal Swamp*. His books reflect not only his interest in science, but also in folklore, with titles such as, *A January Fog Will Freeze A Hog*, *Legends & Myths of the Great Dismal Swamp*, and *The Multi-Lingual Mule and Other Ghost Stories*.

He was a member of VEA, NEA, National Science Teachers Association, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, and Virginia Academy of Sciences.

Hubert Davis is survived by his wife, the former Ruby Spicer of Fredericksburg, Va. and his son (by his first wife, Beulah Lily), Hubert J. Davis Jr., an aeronautical engineer.