

*In Loving Memory of*  
**Richard O. Linke**  
1917 - 2016



3:00 p.m.  
September 4, 2016  
The Helen Mauck Galbreath Chapel  
Ohio University

# Biography

By Dr. Dru Riley Evarts

From his hometown of Summit, NJ, Linke matriculated to Ohio University in the fall of 1937 because of the reputation of its School of Journalism. He had a gift for words and wanted to use them to make a career. He made lifelong friends among the faculty, staff and students whom he met both in class and in extracurricular activities. He never hesitated to say that the decision to enroll at Ohio University was one of the best steps he had made in his entire life.

As early as his high-school days, Linke knew that he wanted to be involved in the entertainment business. It was natural, then, for him to return to the New York City area in 1941, after he had earned his BSJ with an emphasis in public relations. He knew that he needed the experience of writing under pressure, so he joined the NYC Associated Press Bureau (AP), where he also learned how to make contacts, a talent that would serve him well. After two years at AP, he joined a respected public relations firm, Earle Ferris & Co., where he handled publicity for 40 radio stations. Soon he moved up the ladder to a larger firm (Newell-Emmett Co.). By 1947, he wanted to get into the growing record business, so he joined Capitol Records, where he worked with such artists as Nat King Cole, Peggy Lee and band leader Stan Kenton. Linke went on to accept a position as national single sales manager of Columbia Records.

In 1957, Linke decided to leave Columbia so he could devote more time to managing Andy Griffith and to establish his own company, Richard O. Linke and Associates. In 1959, TV producer Sheldon Leonard called Linke to propose a new TV show starring Griffith as a small-town sheriff. Griffith and Linke and their families moved to Hollywood to begin producing the new series, "The Andy Griffith Show," which began its decade-long run in 1960. Throughout the 1960s and early '70s, Linke was arguably the hottest agent in Hollywood, as well as part-owner of four television shows of that era: "The Andy Griffith Show," "Gomer Pyle," "Mayberry RFD," and "The Jim Nabors Hour."

After semi-retiring from the business, Linke and his wife Bettina moved to Athens, Ohio, where he became an adjunct professor with the Ohio University School of Journalism. He taught "Entertainment Public Relations" and also visited other journalism classes for specialized discussions about press coverage of the entertainment industry. Linke became a trustee of the Ohio University Foundation and established the Richard O. Linke Scholarship in the E.W. Scripps School of Journalism.

Linke was recognized by Ohio University several times, being awarded the Medal of Merit Award in 1959 and the Alumnus of the Year Award in 1967 (the first such award given by Ohio University). He served on the Alumni Board 1968-70 and on the University Foundation Board 1993-96. He was also a member of The 1804 Society, which recognizes major donors.

Until the day of his death, he kept in touch with entertainment and Ohio University friends and with his beloved School of Journalism from his home in Hawaii.

# **Program**

## **MUSIC**

Ohio University Flute Duo  
Bradley Legg and Carrie Whatley

## **SPEAKERS**

Remarks and Rememberances

### **Charles J. Ping**

President Emeritus, Ohio University

### **Roderick J. McDavis**

President, Ohio University

### **Ralph S. Izard**

Professor and Director Emeritus, E.W. Scripps School of Journalism

### **J. “Bernie” Toorish**

Founder, Composer, Arranger, The Four Lads

### **Bettina Linke**

Mrs. Richard O. Linke

### **Jack G. Ellis**

Vice President for Development Emeritus, Ohio University

### **Nanci Linke-Ellis and Katharine Linke**

Daughters of Richard O. Linke

### **Robert K. Stewart**

Professor and Director, E.W. Scripps of Journalism

**Reception and Refreshments to Follow at  
E.W. Scripps Hall, 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.**



Mr. Linke with a scholarship recipient, 1970.

**If you would care to help memorialize Mr. Linke, you may make contributions to the Richard O. Linke Scholarship fund. Make checks payable to the Ohio University Foundation  
P.O. Box 869  
Athens, OH 45701**