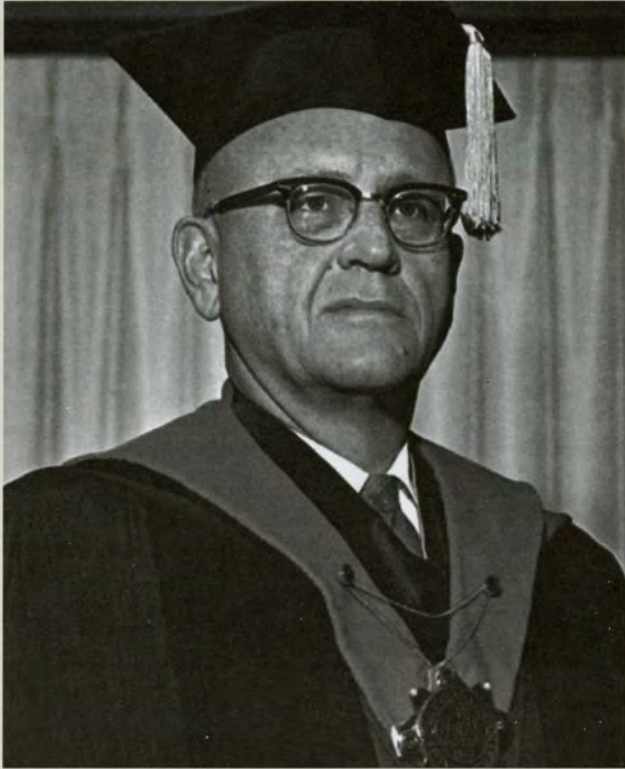


ROBERT H. WICK SCIENCE BUILDING

*A Dedication Celebration*



ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY



Inauguration Day October 29, 1966

In honor of his inauguration, this prophetic tribute was offered to the man who would lead the university during an era of rapid growth and cultural change:

"The 1967 Talahi is dedicated to Robert Wick the adventurer, the optimist, the gallant captain of a bulging ship. Today St. Cloud State is moving in rough and unpredictable waters. The school's growth is accelerating faster than either man or machine can grasp. The facilities which were yesterday's luxuries have become today the barest necessities. What will tomorrow demand?"

"This is the staggering question that has befallen St. Cloud's 14th president. His ability to provide straightforward, accurate answers and with the greatest possible dispatch will be tested repeatedly in the days ahead. To Robert Hobbie Wick, a courageous and capable man, we dedicate the 1967 Talahi."

# The Wick Legacy

COMMITMENT • INTEGRITY • COURAGE

Robert "Bob" Wick served as St. Cloud State's 14th president from 1965-1971, when Bob Dylan's "The Times They Are a Changin'" was the anthem for a generation whose sheer numbers and heightened awareness of human rights and environmental issues would permanently alter campus culture.

Baby boomers were coming of age, and many became the first in their families to seek higher education and professional careers. Suddenly the country had more college students than farmers. SCSU stretched its classrooms and its resources to welcome hundreds more first-generation college students like 1971 graduate Larry Meyer, who went on to be a longtime mayor of St. Cloud, run a successful business with wife and fellow SCSU graduate Peggy Ford Meyer, and sustain his political activism.

He was among the legions of sons and daughters of the World War II generation who were discovering a new level of political and economic strength.

The revolution in social mores and traditions, the unrest, and the widespread desire for a more egalitarian and less materialistic world all came to a head during the Wick era. They fueled the challenges of tremendous enrollment growth and underscored the need for a strong leader to move the campus forward. Wick stepped courageously into this maelstrom of change.

This distinguished man earned widespread respect for making the tough decisions and taking the actions that had significant historical impact on the university.

“Opportunity for higher education was being extended to many of us for the first time, and we were discovering the full privileges of learning and citizenship as we pushed for further progress in social justice issues,” said Al Irby, who was one of the students involved with B-SURE (Black Student Union for Racial Equality), which demonstrated for those policy changes.

“Like many other college students of the late 1960s, we were caught up in the revolutionary changes erupting in our nation,” said Irby, who graduated from St. Cloud State in 1973. “Throughout President Wick’s tenure he remained honest and forthright as he listened and responded with concessions that always came in the environment of reason and order that he sought to maintain on campus. Change may not have come as quickly or as fully as we wanted, but we know that he made great strides in integrating the campus.”



*On the way to Colorado debate meet.*



*1953 debate team members, from left, Ned Brainard, Russ Huffman, Mel Hoaglund, and Duane Lunemann traveled in Dr. Wick’s Buick to a national meet in Colorado.*

### A SIMPLER TIME

Wick had joined the speech department 18 years earlier – when St. Cloud State College was a tightly knit campus community. Faculty members and their spouses surrounded new campus families with support and friendship, Alice Wick remembers. “That was our social group,” she said.

“It was a good life,” said Bob Wick. “It was the center of our lives, that institution. There have been many good people there doing a lot of good teaching.”

But the Wicks also were involved in broader community activities. Bob was active in the Chamber of Commerce, and served on the boards of St. Cloud Hospital, St. Cloud Public Library and St. Cloud National Bank and Trust Company. Alice, who taught shorthand, typing, and business writing on campus from 1960-1978, served on the City Council in the 1970s.



## *Robert & Alice Wick*

Robert H. Wick taught speech for five years in the building which today carries his name.

And, the home the Wicks first rented when they came to St. Cloud, Minn., stood on the lot where the Robert H. Wick Science Building now stands.

Dr. Wick was instrumental in obtaining funding for the \$6.5 million building, completed in 1973, from the Minnesota Legislature. It provides a planetarium, aquarium, greenhouse and museum as well as classrooms, laboratories, offices and an auditorium.

*A Dedication Celebration*

*Robert H. Wick Science Building*

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2005



Arthur Grachek  
Professor Emeritus and former student of Robert H. Wick  
Master of Ceremonies

REMARKS

Donald Sikkink, retired SCSU Vice President for Academic Affairs

David DeGroote, Dean, SCSU College of Science and Engineering

Laura King, Vice President for Finance, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities

Roy H. Saigo, President, St. Cloud State University

Robert H. Wick, President, St. Cloud State University, 1965-71



*Wife Alice, daughter Ann, and sons Bill and Tom listen intently to President Wick's inaugural address.*

Ann, whose dad signed her diploma from St. Cloud State in 1967, went on to teach high school in Connecticut for two years and in Edina since 1970. Tom, the only Wick sibling to choose another college, was graduated from the University of Minnesota and received his Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania. He's a market research analyst with Hewlett Packard in Palo Alto, Calif. Bill, who was just 11 when their dad was inaugurated as president, is an associate principal at Centennial Public Schools in the Twin City metro area.

"It was a wonderful life growing up on campus and going to the lab school," said Bill, whose own two children, David and Rachel, are current SCSU students. "We were lucky, too, growing up with so many faculty and faculty children as friends."

But the Wick children say they learned their most important lessons from their parents, who taught character, integrity, and community service by example. "We had a complete love of learning and reading, and an interest in all things that were going on in the world," said daughter Ann Wick Roettger. "Graciousness, courtesy and civility were valued, and we learned the importance of patience. My mom and dad were our best role models."

"From dad we learned the Wick ethic – up early, always work in a shirt and tie," said Bill. "Being an educator I've learned how much we took that richness in our home life for granted – the books, the magazines, the discussions, the love of the English language and reading and writing," Bill said.

"I thought that's how all families lived when I was growing up," said Ann.

Granddaughter Rachel, a senior at SCSU, said most of her professors don't connect her with the former president, but a few do remember him. "It's a little embarrassing when a teacher starts talking about it, but it's also a pretty great honor."

The Wick legacy is vivid for former students, as well. "As our teacher, Dr. Wick was the ultimate professional in his demeanor and his manner, but at the same time he was a warm human being," said 1953 graduate Mel Hoaglund, one of four members of a debate team that Professor Wick drove to Denver for a national debate meet. For more than 50 years the four men – Hoaglund, Colorado

school administrator Ned Brainard, Methodist pastor Duane Lunemann, and Tennessee physician Russ Huffmann – have returned to St. Cloud frequently to enjoy dinner with their friend and mentor. All have earned the title of "Dr." or "Rev."

As an educator, Wick has been recognized for outstanding teaching by the Speech Teachers Association of Minnesota, tapped for service on the Minnesota Manpower Commission, and received the SCSU Distinguished Service Award.

Hoaglund, who will become the third of the four debaters to receive a distinguished alumnus award at homecoming this fall, recalls the trip to Colorado in Dr. Wick's Buick as a life-changing event.

Wick's debaters learned to "think on their feet and present ideas cogently and persuasively in a short period of time," Hoaglund said. "We learned it was important to be willing to do a lot of research, to know both sides of a question." That ability to listen, study and weigh different points of view before taking action has served Wick well in the multiple roles he's taken throughout his life.

## FROM TEACHER TO LEADER

After teaching and service as dean of the School of Literature and Arts, academic dean and vice president, Wick was appointed to succeed George Budd as president of St. Cloud State College on April 25, 1966. He had been acting president since 1965.

By the end of his first year as president, St. Cloud State College enrolled 3,500 freshmen, more than all other undergraduate students combined. To put that extraordinary number into perspective, the university currently welcomes about 2,400 freshmen each fall. Total enrollment reached 9,683 in the fall of 1969 – twice the enrollment of seven years earlier and three times the number of students who were here when he arrived on campus.

“It was a tough time,” said Wick. “We had to lobby to raise salaries and obtain the resources to add more classes.”

During his administration, Wick was instrumental in establishing new programs and departments that are now recognized areas of distinction at SCSU, including the mass communications department and the honors program. KVSC, the campus FM radio station, went on the air; and UTVS, the campus television station, produced its first live programming. The annual math contest, which remains the largest and most prestigious in Minnesota, was initiated in 1967.

New construction during the Wick administration included the Atwood Center, Performing Arts Center, Business Building, the Education Building, and three student residential halls – Stearns, Benton and Sherburne. Centennial Hall ground breaking took place during his tenure and opened shortly after his 1971 return to the faculty as the Minnesota State College System’s first Distinguished Service Professor.

Distinguished Professor Robert Wick retired in 1978, but he and Alice have remained frequent visitors and loyal supporters of campus and alumni activities.

The year of his retirement, former President Wick addressed graduates and guests at the 1978 spring commencement exercises. The man who distinguished himself, his family and his university with a personal and professional life of commitment, courage and caring had this advice for graduates:

“Freedom, as a value or goal, never stands alone. If freedom is to survive and prosper in the world, mankind must do better at living and working together. More emphasis must be placed upon self-discipline, personal responsibility and working for the common good.”



*SCSU ties remain strong. Bob and Alice with grandchildren David and Rachel, current SCSU students; and daughter Ann and son Bill, both alumni. The family recently gathered in front of Whitney House, where President Wick had his office.*

*This story, written by Marsha Shoemaker of University Communications, will also appear in the fall issue of Outlook, the magazine of SCSU.*



*In honor of President Robert H. Wick's dedicated service.*

"The years from 1965 to 1975 may have been the most stressful and difficult in the history of St. Cloud State. The institution more than doubled in size without adequate legislative funding for faculty and facilities. It was a period of student and faculty unrest brought on by archaic student conduct rules and the Viet Nam conflict. The school survived and actually improved in this difficult period due to the contributions of many persons, but the key was President Wick. His skills of careful listening, concern for logical decisions, not "playing favorites," belief in content over form, and insistence on being ethical kept SCSU alive and moving forward ... A Wick building is a highly desirable and appropriate conclusion to his remarkable story."

*~ Don Sikkink, retired SCSU vice president of academic affairs*

"... those who refer to President Wick do so with respect and admiration. President Wick's popularity with students and faculty was evidenced by newspaper headlines of the day that stated, "Student Rally Cheers for Dr. Wick" and "400 Faculty Back Wick." I believe that naming the Center for President Wick would be a fitting tribute."

*~ Glenn Seaberg '90 '02, president, SCSU Alumni Association*

"He rose to the challenges he faced – from enduring with dignity the "sit in" in his office to finding adequate support for our rapidly growing university. I believe this university is what it is today because of the efforts of President Wick, and I am grateful to see the institution continuing in his great tradition."

*~ Don Wetter, president, SCSU Foundation Board of Trustees*

"President Robert Wick was embroiled in those changing times and reacted to even the most challenging incidents with dignity and grace. Throughout his tenure, he remained honest and forthright as he listened and responded with concessions that always came in the environment of reason and order that he sought to maintain on campus ... My college friends and I respect and admire this man whose presidency had significant historical impact. President Wick's action led to a new heritage of welcoming increasing numbers of students who represented a wide variety of backgrounds and cultures to the St. Cloud State University campus."

*~ Al Irby '73*

"His qualities of leadership, integrity, fairness and openness make him a particular favorite with students. But beyond that, he steered the college through a difficult time of campus political turmoil, which was engulfing most college campuses at the time. It is worthwhile to note that this did not sidetrack Dr. Wick's leadership."

*~ Larry Meyer '71*

"Since graduating in 1953, what I learned from Dr. Wick in the broad field of oral communications was a key to success in several positions, all of which demanded communication abilities in working with students, staff, parents, school boards, and various other governmental bodies. I am indeed grateful to Dr. Wick for the education he provided me and so many other students. ... Through him we learned many values such as kindness, compassion, and the scholarship associated with researching each year's national debate topic."

*~ Edward (Ned) Brainard '53*