

JACK BROOKS



1922 - 2012

Jack Brooks spent 42 years in Congress representing his Southeast Texas district and was in the Dallas motorcade in 1963 when President John F. Kennedy was assassinated.

Brooks grew up in Beaumont and graduated from Lamar in 1941 when it was a junior college. After graduating in 1943 with a bachelor's degree at the University of Texas and serving in the United States Marine Corps during World War II, he returned to Beaumont and ran for a seat in the Texas House. At 23, he won that election. Brooks graduated in 1949 from law school at the University of Texas while serving in the Legislature. In 1952 at age 29, he won his first term in Congress and was re-elected every two years until 1994. As United States Representative for Southeast Texas, Brooks built friendships with powerful Texas leaders, including House Speaker Sam Rayburn and President Lyndon B. Johnson, and became a Washington power in his own right. Brooks was instrumental in the passage of scores of pieces of significant legislation. His work in Congress led to critical improvements to Southeast Texas waterways, including the creation of the Port of Beaumont Navigation District and the Sam Rayburn Dam and Reservoir.

"All good things that have happened in this area are based on the foundation he left, from the waterways to the interstate. You name it, and he had a hand in it. Jack Brooks is unquestionably a Southeast Texas Legend."

Beaumont attorney Hubert Oxford III