

DOCUMENTS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

**REPORT OF THE MEMORIAL RESOLUTION COMMITTEE FOR
LATHAN W. SANFORD**

The special committee of the General Faculty to prepare a memorial resolution for Lathan W. Sanford, professor, theatre and dance, has filed with the Secretary of the General Faculty the following report.

John R. Durbin, Secretary
The General Faculty

**IN MEMORIAM
LATHAN W. SANFORD**

Lathan Wade Sanford, a renowned dancer, choreographer, and teacher, died January 31, 2000. He joined the faculty of the then Department of Drama in 1969 as a jazz dance teacher. He continued to teach as the senior jazz instructor until his retirement in 1998. He was born in Piedmont, Alabama, on March 26, 1936, and attended Auburn University before transferring to the Department of Drama at The University of Texas in 1955, graduating with a BFA degree in 1958. He was immediately employed by the department to teach dance while Shirley Dodge, his teacher and mentor, took a leave of absence.

Following service in the United States Army as a cryptographer in Korea, Lathan pursued a professional career in New York City. He studied with jazz legend Matt Mattox and modern dance pioneer Hanya Holm. He performed on Broadway, in Las Vegas, and in regional theatres around the country, with directors Bob Fosse, George Abbott, and John Bowab. He choreographed for Chita Rivera, Carol Lawrence, Ginger Rogers, Van Johnson, Dick Shawn, Juliet Prowse, and other well-known performers. He directed and choreographed musicals nationally and abroad, including the dance for the world premier of *The Fantasticks* at Barnard College in 1958. He was closely associated with the musical *Sweet Charity*, in which he toured as “Dark Glasses,” under Bob Fosse’s direction, in the mid-sixties. He became sought after as a director for this production and staged it in San Diego, St. Louis Muny Opera, and twice in Japan—once for the Neissi Theatre in Tokyo and once for the Umeda Koma Theatre in Osaka.

Sanford’s professional credentials included membership in the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers, the Actor’s Equity Association, the Screen Actors Guild, and the American Guild of Variety Artists.

Mr. Sanford was well regarded by his students and colleagues alike. During the period 1970 to 1984 he directed and choreographed several productions for the Department of Drama, including *L’il Abner*, *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, *Damn Yankees*, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, *Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris*, *Celebration*, *Cabaret*, *Oklahoma!*, *Tintypes*, and *Anything Goes*.

Lathan Sanford was more than a teacher and dancer. He was a loyal friend who could always be counted on to be there when he was needed. He was a devoted husband to his wife, Renata. He adored his daughter, Samantha. Lathan will be greatly missed by his many friends who studied and worked with him.

This memorial resolution was prepared by a special committee consisting of Professors David Nancarrow (chair) and John Brokaw, and Sondra Lomax.

Distributed to the Dean of the College of Fine Arts, the Executive Vice President and Provost, and the President on September 1, 2000. Copies are available on request from the Office of the General Faculty, FAC 22, F9500. This resolution is posted under “Memorials” at: <http://www.utexas.edu/faculty/council/>