

Self-improvement speaker Dale Carnegie inducted into Missouri hall of fame

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A half century after his death, self-improvement speaker and author Dale Carnegie was honored Wednesday in his native Missouri, thanks to some influential people won over by his motivational methods.

Carnegie, known for his best-selling book "How to Win Friends and Influence People," was inducted into the Hall of Famous Missourians — joining the likes of Harry Truman, Walt Disney and 22 others whose busts are stationed in the Capitol's third-floor Rotunda.

Although Carnegie died in 1955, just shy of his 67th birthday, several of his protégés were present to dedicate the bronze bust during a ceremony in the House chamber.

"Mr. Carnegie considered Missouri the foundation of who he was," said Michael Crom, Carnegie's step-grandson and the executive vice president of the Hauppauge, New York-based firm Dale Carnegie Training.

Carnegie was born into a farming family in Maryville, Missouri, in 1888 and enrolled at age 16 at Warrensburg State Teachers College, now known as Central Missouri State University. It was there that Carnegie overcame his embarrassment about his family's poverty — evidenced by his short pant legs and his three-mile (five-kilometer) horseback commute to the college — by joining the speech and debate team, Crom said.

Carnegie sold correspondence courses to ranchers after earning his teaching certificate, then sold bacon, soap and lard for Armour & Co., making his Omaha, Nebraska, sales territory tops for the firm nationally. Carnegie later moved to New York City and began teaching public speaking in 1912.

His firm, Dale Carnegie Training, continues today — focusing mainly on business people — with a network of more than 2,800 trainers and offices in about 75 countries. It boasts that more than 7 million people have taken Dale Carnegie Training courses.

Hall of Famous Missourians: <http://www.house.mo.gov/famous/default.aspx>