

Robert E. Booth, 90, radiologist

By Walter F. Naedele

Inquirer Staff Writer

Robert E. Booth, 90, chairman of the radiology department at what is now Underwood-Memorial Hospital for more than 30 years, died of pneumonia March 11 at Waverly Heights, a retirement community in Gladwyne.

Dr. Booth, a native of the Fox Chase section of Philadelphia, graduated from Olney High school in 1936 and in 1940 earned a bachelor's degree in English literature at the University of Pennsylvania.

Along with future sociologist Digby Baltzell, he was a captain of the varsity squash team. Dr. Booth's son, Robert Jr., said that he also won the individual Eastern Intercollegiate Badminton championship.

After graduating in 1943 from Penn's medical school, Dr. Booth served his radiology residency at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania from 1944 to 1946.

He was in the Navy medical corps from 1946 to 1948, serving at the U.S. Naval Hospital in Philadelphia, and at Municipal Hospital in Key West, Fla.

"He was the only radiologist" at both places, his son said, "and so he was de-facto chief."

Dr. Booth became the first chairman of the radiology department at Underwood Hospital in 1948, his son said. A spokesman at the Woodbury, Gloucester County, facility said it later became Underwood-Memorial.

During the same period, Dr. Booth became radiology chairman at Elmer (N.J.) Community Hospital, his son said, and served in both posts until 1985. Dr. Booth had private practices in Haddonfield and Woodbury.

In 1978, his son said, Dr. Booth was president of the medical staff at Underwood, and in 1981 he was president of the medical staff at Elmer. In the 1980s, he was president of the Medical Club of Philadelphia.

The longtime Haddonfield resident moved to Chestnut Hill in 2000 and to Waverly Heights in 2004.

Besides his son, Dr. Booth is survived by daughters Leslie Faust and Alison Halloran; and 10 grandchildren. His wife, Elizabeth, died last year.

A private service took place March 14.