

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF ROBERT F. JUDD

A tribute from Carla Zecher



The AMS is a member of the American Council of Learned Societies. The executive directors of the member societies meet twice a year, and we also have a listserv, where we discuss matters relating to the mission, governance, and administration of scholarly and professional societies.

After Bob's passing, a chain of reminiscences started on the listserv. I thought you might like to hear a few of the tributes that came in from Bob's colleagues at other societies. His peers held him in very high esteem:

“Bob was such a gentle soul, unflappable, and always thoughtful.”

“He worked with patience and good judgement under pressure and was a great colleague to us all.”

“Bob was always among the first colleagues toward whom I would gravitate . . . at the beginning of our ACLS meetings. It is hard to think of anyone as thoughtful, practical and thoroughly enjoyable as Bob.”

“I have never met a better person: kind, smart, deliberative, practical . . . he was the whole package. And he was always looking to the future. We had a long phone conversation [recently] about the sustainability of our annual meetings and what we could do to address the climate crisis. He was always thinking about how things could be made better.”

“I first met Bob at my very first [ACLS] meeting in San Jose in 2005, and will never forget his marvelous keyboard playing for us when we visited the music collection at San Jose State.”

“Bob has been a stalwart of our group for longer than I can remember because when I joined in 2010 he was already clearly among those to whom everyone looked for judgment and wisdom. He never failed to offer these with a combination of humility and generosity that I came to appreciate increasingly every year.”

And a final tribute, also from the ACLS but closer to home.



ACLS 2012 – BOB WITH MARIANA WHITMER AND ELAINE SISMAN

My sister works in academic administration. A few years ago she attended an ACLS meeting for the first time. I enjoyed introducing her to my colleagues from other societies. Bob and Cristle were there too, representing their organizations. After he passed, in August, I was emailing with my sister, and said I was grieving for a colleague and friend, Bob Judd. I said, “You might remember meeting him at [that] ACLS spring meeting you attended. I think we all sat together at a couple of meals.” She wrote right back and said, “I remember him—he was terrific.” That pretty much said it all. He was a guy you remembered, even on very short acquaintance, and if you had to characterize him with just one adjective, well, “terrific” is appropriate.

