

## CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF ROBERT F. JUDD

# *A tribute from* Bob's wife Cristle Collins Judd



BOB AND CRISTLE, AUGUST 2019

“catch of the day”, day after day, every day, smiling, silly, and all the rest of it.

A bit of our story for those who don’t know it. We were that thing that got an official name: “a dual career academic couple”. We got married in Oxford when Bob was a couple of years into his PhD and as I was beginning mine, and our first jobs were something of a lark—we were ABD and out of money and

there were two jobs at the University of Melbourne, so we applied and said “if we get both of them, we’ll go”. Well, we did ...and we did! It turned out to be the first and only time that a pair of jobs lined up like that and the next few years were trade-offs and the life of trailing spouses, first my job, then Bob’s, then mine. When a job offer at Penn came for me, it was the same semester that Bob was awarded tenure at Cal State Fresno, which he gave up to support my opportunity. (Bob’s unstinting support for others will be a recurring theme in these comments.) A couple of years later, the opportunity at the AMS opened up for Bob.

BOB AND CRISTLE, OXFORD 1983

I recently came across Bob’s application letter to the AMS. In the letter, he identified an area of concern which he described as:

*a certain sense of distance between individual members and the AMS as an organization.*

He went on to say that he hoped

*to bring more people to think about the Society as “us” and “we” rather than “it” or “they.”*



CRISTLE’S “CATCH OF THE DAY”



END-OF-YEAR PARTY,  
UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE 1987



That desire—to bring people together and to help them feel connected and part of a vibrant community—remained a priority for Bob throughout his time at the AMS; indeed, bringing people together was a theme not just at work with the AMS, but in so much of Bob’s life.

Bob concluded his application letter with a prescient statement.

*The key word here may be “committed.” The position is not by any means “just another office job;” it requires an attitude of committed service to the Society that sets aside certain personal academic and financial goals in favor of those of the Society. My personal convictions in this regard are tangible; I am willing to work for the Society in full knowledge of the possible personal cost involved.*

That phrase: *an attitude of committed service...* encapsulates Bob’s approach to his job and to his life. It wasn’t that service came naturally to him, rather he felt called to it from his faith and he really, *really* worked at it. That manifest itself in many ways, not least of which was that Bob felt the society was running best when his own contributions were invisible.

An amusing illustration of the indispensable role Bob played for the board and the many presidents he served is a vignette from Peter Burkholder’s tenure. Bob received an email from a member who was very upset that the society had not taken a particular political stand. Bob responded with a patient and thorough explanation—many of you know those emails from Bob—but the member, still outraged, wrote back with one of those email “door slams” saying he was quitting the society instantly. Bob forwarded the email to Peter without thinking to change its subject line, so Peter received an email from the sender: Bob Judd and the subject line: “I am resigning from the AMS effective immediately!” Our phone has never rung so quickly as Peter implored Bob never to use that subject line again!

Bob had a heart for service, but he wasn’t egoless; he was also a *fierce* competitor. Ask our kids about playing chess with Bob (even when they were in pre-K!), or ask his mother about playing “Words with Friends” (who regularly beats their mother at “Words with Friends”?) or ask anybody who played squash with him. On that latter... his competitive drive and desire to serve coupled with his desire to bring people together was exemplified when the squash players at the Bronxville Field Club celebrated Bob’s life a couple of weeks ago and named a tournament in his honor. What other musicologist do you know with a squash tournament named for them?



BOB AT THE HARPSICHORD,  
LONDON 1983

Bob was also **endlessly curious yet imminently practical**. As you heard, his research was about notation and keyboards, and he was fascinated with the auto-didactic aspect of what he studied, perhaps because he was such an auto-didact himself. Over his 23 years with the AMS, Bob just learned what he needed to know: page layout, statistics, book-keeping and accounting, web design, HTML, Java, Perl, php, data structures, meeting management, labor and tax law... That list could go on a very long time.



BOB IN THE PHILADELPHIA OFFICE OF THE AMS



BRONXVILLE FIELD CLUB, BOB JUDD  
MEMORIAL SQUASH TOURNAMENT



Bob was also someone who literally **put his hand up**. As some of you heard at Bob's funeral, our first time (as visitors) at what would become our parish church at Bronxville, the substitute organist was missing in action. The rector announced this, Bob looked at me—I shrugged (he never actually wanted my advice about whether he should volunteer to do something) and he stuck his hand up and said that he was an organist and would be glad to play, then went to the organ, took off his shoes, and played the service, never having seen the instrument and with no idea what the hymns or service music would be. Since his death I have been reminded how often he put his hand up when the call for volunteers went out: helping the Society for Seventeenth Century Music launch their journal, helping the Society for Christian Scholarship in Music get off the ground, helping to create the back-end for *Music Theory Online*, and at our girls' schools, in our churches, in our neighborhoods, and so much more.



"LOOK WHAT I MADE!" BOB'S FAMOUS PICKLES

Bob's *frugality* was legendary, but it came with an *extravagant generosity*, especially of himself. Those of you who read Hannah's tribute to her dad on the AMS website learned that his favorite cookbook was called *More with Less* and that he made things, including, famously, pickles, but also including a playhouse. (Our very own "Bob the Builder").

The playhouse story is actually a perfect illustration. The backstory is that in the summer I had to finish the manuscript for my tenure book, I thought we should spend \$104 for a Little Tykes 3'x3' plastic playhouse to help occupy the girls.

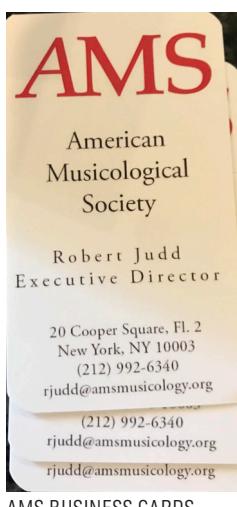
(Don't ask me how

I still remember that it was \$104). The reality is that we didn't have the money, but I had to write and was looking for anything that could help. Bob decided he should instead build a playhouse, and emerged with plans he found on the internet. He returned home from the Home Depot with a *pallet* of cedar shake shingles, pine siding, 4x4s, roofing tar paper and more to build a serious (and seriously big) playhouse, complete with dutch door. He got the foundation laid (yes, this playhouse required a foundation), and then promised to take a week off work to get it done.

Unfortunately, on the way home from the office he hit an oil slick on his bike and broke his wrist badly, requiring surgery. Shortly after the pin went in, he played a wedding in a cast (that historic keyboard 2-3-2-3 fingering came in handy), and then basically built the playhouse literally single-handedly (look closely: there is a cast on his right arm in the photo!). The whole story is some crazy combination of Bob's indomitable spirit, the pride he took in getting things done, his unbounded love for our daughters, and his extravagant generosity of himself, of his time, and of his many talents.



"BOB THE BUILDER"



And there were touching, ridiculous tangible reminders of Bob's frugality. About a week after his death, a package arrived at the house from Snapfish. I opened it to find new business cards, ordered the day before he died. I thought "who orders business cards from Snapfish?" Then I saw that he had used a 50% off coupon on the day it was to expire along with another special deal that meant Snapfish more or less paid Bob to have business cards. More poignantly, as I looked through the box of Bob's annual meeting stuff, I found his lanyard and empty name badge holder – ready for re-use. And I know that you all, like me, can picture him with that lanyard, behind the registration desk or at every event at the meeting. You just didn't know he re-used it every year!



CELEBRATING THE CONCLUSION OF THE OPUS CAMPAIGN



Sometimes I've been asked what it's like to be at the annual meeting with Bob. I joked when I sent a 75<sup>th</sup> birthday greeting for the AMS during the Opus campaign that I was "married to the AMS". I have my own identity, but at AMS meetings, I was also clearly (and often primarily) identified as "Bob's wife" which conferred a status at times approaching near royalty. Many of you have shared with me the story of Bob's calming presence throughout the meeting. But behind the scenes it was a little like this photo. Most nights he didn't make it back to the room until after midnight, partly because he wanted to check on everything, partly because there was some fire to put out, but mostly because he just basked in the chance to see everyone and everything and he really wanted it to run well. And then he would be up at about 4 a.m. and out of the room by 6 with whatever new thing had been added the day before.



"WHAAAAAAAT?"



BOB WITH "AMS BABY" SARAH, NOVEMBER 1996

That basking in everything and everyone never felt more true than at the business meeting. Since coming to my first annual meeting, I have only missed one business meeting, as did Bob (his first working for the AMS). That would be 1996 in Baltimore. As Phil Gossett put it at the business meeting, Bob and I had left that day for the imminent nature of an imminent event. I'm delighted to introduce you to that imminent event, Sarah Judd, who has for 23 years generously deferred her birthday to the AMS meeting.



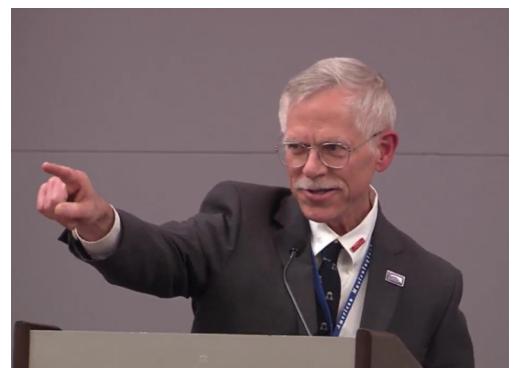
THE JUDD FAMILY AT SARAH'S GRADUATION FROM HARVARD, MAY 2019



When I say basking in everything and everyone, you all know the moments at the business meeting I'm talking about when Bob would stand up and look out at the room with a great big grin on his face. After some corny joke or heartfelt observation the thanks would start, and here's the thing, we all knew: he meant every word. And at some point he would say something like "and it's just such a privilege to work with all of you and to be able to support the work that you are doing."

So I won't do it as well as Bob would have, but let me finish with a moment of heartfelt "thank yous". *Thank you* to all of you who told Bob how much you appreciated him and all he did for the society. *Thank you* for the warmth and generosity of the applause you gave him at the business meeting, which seemed to grow longer and warmer with each passing year. *Thank you* for recognizing the goodness that Bob tried to foster in his interactions and finding the opportunities to do so yourself.

Bob was a list-maker and there was always a "to-do" list going. On his desk, I found one of Bob's last such lists, headed "My legacy with the AMS," followed by "financial sustainability". Bob had begun conversations about retiring, and I suspect these notes came out of those conversations. Bob was hyper-focused on trying to help the society reach this goal, and so I thank you especially for honoring him with your gifts to the society. I suspect he would have been deeply humbled by the gesture, but also deeply grateful. So in the inimitable words of Bob Judd: *Thank you*. Thank you for being the AMS he so treasured serving.



BOB AT THE PODIUM, AMS SAN ANTONIO, 2018



CONTENTED AT THE END OF THE DAY

