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James Grady Hobson

James Grady Hobson passed away peacefully at his home in Selma California on Wednesday, November 30, 2011 at the age of 85. He was born on February 5, 1926. He had been living in his family house with his niece's family taking care of him as he got progressively weaker these past couple of years. He suffered from diabetes, macular degeneration and emphysema, but stayed cheerful to the end, saying that having lasted past the age his father and grandfather passed, he was ahead of the game.

Grady first joined Robert College as a Math teacher in 1952. He taught at both RC campuses for a total of 20 years between 1952-60, 1962-68 and 1971-77, and also served as Housemaster at Theodorus Hall and Hamlin Hall in the 50's. When back in the USA, he taught at Verde Valley School in Sedona, Arizona (1968-1971), in St. Mary's Hall San Antonio, Texas (1977-1979), and Trinity School in New York City starting in 1979, until his retirement in 1991.

His world was wonderfully, serenely, unflappably orderly. In the complicated, conflicting, emotionally turbulent world of adolescence, Grady radiated calm and sensibleness. Failing grades, messy dorm rooms, infatuations, heartbreak, despair and disorganization were kindly, simply and with rare fine humor banished to other realms. He never scolded, never chastised, never condescended, never judged. Methodical, organized, exact, systematic, that was him, yet he was the warmest, easiest person in the world to get along with. Grady knew how to motivate by example. For him nothing was weighted or complicated or unsolvable.

As a housemaster his discipline was fair, and tinged with humor. Grady was able to allay your fears, affirm for you the beauty of the world, give you hope for the future. He was a sanity check for us students, a sounding board to reorient ourselves and face our problems. In our "Catcher in the Rye" days he was a panacea for our teenage angst. He took us seriously and he listened to us. He introduced us to good music, waffles and maple syrup, and he treated us as adults.

He always had a soft spot for Robert College and Istanbul. He repeatedly said that he felt privileged to teach and get to know so many smart kids in Istanbul. But Grady had many favorite cities! "Ah!" he would say "Istanbul, now that's a city. I would not mind spending the rest of my days there - except maybe in winter, when you wonder why you ever ended up in such a dreary, wet, dismal place. But then spring comes... and you remember why!" or "Portland is my favorite city, but it rains a lot there," or "I could live forever in New York City, I love that town. But you need a reasonable amount of money for fun and games on that island."

When he played all 13 Rachmaninov preludes one afternoon at his RC attic in Barton Hall in the 70's, I asked him in amazement how he was able to make it all seem so effortless. His answer was that he had taken piano lessons as a kid. Modest to a fault.

He loved jigsaw puzzles, crosswords, music, sunshine, naps, watching movies from his astounding collection, and people - family, friends and students.



He compiled a videotape of his days in Robert College and Istanbul, which is heartbreakingly nostalgic for me. He was an avid reader and letter writer. He had impeccable handwriting, but composed his colorful letters on a typewriter until his eyesight started failing near the end.

Grady Hobson was a legendary teacher and no one who knew him, was his student, or worked with him will ever forget him. His passing marks the end of an epoch for many people: his students, colleagues and many friends in Turkey and in the USA. To me personally, he was the last free-spirit, someone strong enough to stand tall, and lead the way by being stable, wise, kind and assuring. An extraordinary human being. He was an influential teacher, a role model and a dear friend to many. A charismatic person if there ever was one. Grady will live in our hearts always. May he rest in peace. Hepimizin başı sağolsun.

Contributed by Ömer Eğecioğlu RC 72 For Ömer Eğecioğlu's interview with Grady Hobson see RCQ, Spring/Summer 2003, issue 22, p. 46 You can read it online at www.robcoll.k12.tr

Eleanor Romig Jaquinet

"Elli" Romig Jaquinet passed away on January 6, 2012 in Hyannis, MA. Her niece Diana Romig Mellin wrote to the RCQ to inform us of her death.

Elli graduated from Mount Holyoke in 1952 and from Harvard Graduate School of Education in 1956. She taught 'special English' at ACG between 1952 - 55 and returned to be the American Vice President and Dean of Women at ACG between 1963-66. It was at RC that

she met and married Louis E. Jaquinet, professor of French at RC who predeceased her in Nov. 2002 (see obituary in the RCQ, issue 22)

Elli was also Dean at Pine Manor and Douglas College, Rutgers University. She had a full life spending time between Turkey, Switzerland, Cape Cod and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

