

## Remembrances of Philip B. Meggs

*Upon learning of the death of Phil Meggs and, after the initial shock had passed, I was moved to recollect memories about him and the special times we shared together over the years. Looking back, I ask myself what qualities were special about him and what words best characterize him:*



*He was a consummate scholar and master teacher to all who knew him.*

*I have always felt a special connection to Phil as our careers were parallel in teaching and in the sharing of our common passion for knowing and interpreting the history of our field.*

*He was always unselfishly ready and willing to contribute his knowledge in any setting.*

*I remember his enthusiasm in participating in our RIT design history symposium in 1983 and how much his presence added to the program.*

*He helped to make graphic design a recognized profession by creating the first and most comprehensive history of the field.*

*I remember the excitement when I first learned that, at last, there would be a definitive book which would detail the history of graphic design.*

*He wholeheartedly supported design history initiatives by others.*

*I recall the joy we shared at the 1983 RIT Design History Symposium when Phil proudly brought his freshly printed first edition of *A History of Graphic Design*. His timing was flawless. I use this book every day.*

*He believed in the importance of graphic design history for students, teachers, and practitioners.*

*For me, when teaching courses in design history, it is nearly impossible not to mention Phil and his work, not to quote him or not to recommend *A History of Graphic Design*. Like a select few other historians Phil, through his work and teaching, became an important part of the emerging history of graphic design himself a "legend in his own time" and, as it were, he deserved it.*

*He was a pioneer in graphic design education, giving all of us an historical resource of immense value.*

*At the founding of the fledgling Graphic Design Education Association, I remember how honored I was to be sitting beside him at the early board meetings and how I looked forward to learning from him and working with him in that setting.*

*He was a leader and a visionary well ahead of his time; in what he did, he had no equal.*

*I have felt that Phil's great knowledge of design history gave legitimacy to the endeavor of studying the history of graphic design.*

*He was a role model for professionalism.*

*I have long felt that his exceptional work supported advocacy for graphic design as a profession.*

*He was an individual who exuded integrity in everything he touched.*

*Phil's very presence added to any collegial dialogue. When he spoke something substantive was contributed.*

*He was my idea of the true Southern gentleman.*

*The last time I saw Phil was several years ago when I was asked to visit VCU and do a lecture there. Phil made me feel very much at home as we shared common anecdotes. Especially vivid in my memory were the warm welcome, the brunch with the Meggs family, the pleasant camaraderie of the day and the feeling of being among kindred souls.*

*In my own work, when interviewing many design pioneers, I always conclude by asking them how they would like to be remembered. Consistently this question brings forth dramatic and even poetic replies. For example, Paul Rand's answer was impressive because all he said was, "I want to be remembered as someone who did good work." Since Phil was of a younger generation, I never asked him this question but, if permitted here, I can speculate on what kind of answer he would have offered. He might have said..."I want to be remembered as a good teacher who knew his stuff."*

*R. Roger Remington*