



Mark Theodore Gilderhus

November 15, 1941 - January 22, 2015

Mark T. Gilderhus, a professor of U.S. diplomatic history, died at his home in Fort Collins on Thursday, January 22, of cancer.

Gilderhus was born on November 15, 1941 in Rochester, MN. He earned a BA in History from Gustavus Adolphus College in 1963, and a Ph.D. in History from the University of Nebraska on June 3, 1968. He taught at Colorado State University for 29 years, serving as the Chair of the History Department from 1980 to 1993.

Professor Doug Yarrington, currently the Chair of CSU's History Department remembers that, "Mark developed the department's first classes in historiography, U.S. military history, and U. S. women's history. As chair of an all-male department in the 1980s, he created and taught the latter course when student demand for women's history was growing but the university was slow to create a faculty position dedicated to that field. He also made important contributions to the Elderhostel program at CSU.

In 1997, he accepted the Lyndon Baines Johnson Chair in History at Texas Christian University where he served in this capacity until his retirement in 2010. Professor William Beezley, a colleague, close friend, and partner in crime said, "Mark Gilderhus in a career spanning more than four decades established himself as one of the leading historians of U.S.-Latin American

diplomacy, military history, and historical methodology. Especially in diplomatic history, he shifted the focus from the exchange of official dispatches to the actions of individuals who shaped policies and implemented them. Also in his work on war and the military, he examined the face of battle, meaning the actions of those on the ground in harm's way. His determination to write about individuals revealed that as a scholar as well as a teacher he cherished men and women and their experiences in the past.

Professor Mark Stoler, a colleague, close friend, and fellow Blues lover, said, "Mark was one of the most highly regarded historians of U.S. relations with Latin America in the country--so much so that he was elected to the vice-presidency and presidency of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations in 1995-96 and held the prestigious Johnson endowed chair at Texas Christian University after he left Colorado State, where for many years he chaired the History Department. He was also deeply interested in the teaching of history on both the graduate and undergraduate levels and beloved as well as highly respected by many of his students--and by his colleagues. His longevity as chair of the History Department at CSU, his holding of the Johnson chair, and his election as SHAFR president all stand as evidence of that.

Gilderhus was the author of numerous articles and books, including *Diplomacy and Revolution: U.S.-Mexican Relations Under Wilson and Carranza* (1977); *Pan American Visions: Woodrow Wilson and the Western Hemisphere, 1913-1921* (1986); *The Second Century: U.S.-Latin American Relations Since 1889* (1999); and *History and Historians* (2009), which is in its 7th edition.

Mark loved jazz, cowboy movies, and stompin' to the blues. He had a wonderful sense of humor, a generous spirit and was a kind colleague and friend. He was a loving husband, brother, and father.

He is survived by his wife, Nancy Gilderhus, of Fort Collins, and his two daughters: Kirsten Gilderhus, of Fort Collins; Lesley Jones, of Fort Collins; and three grandchildren Della Fisher, and Morgan and Jake Jones. He also is survived by a sister, Susan Zakeer, of Blaine, Minnesota.

Memorial donations may be made to Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR) with a note in memory or honor of Mark Gilderhus, and sent to Professor Peter Hahn, Executive Director of SHAFR, Department of History, Ohio State University, 106 Dulles Hall, 230 West 17th Avenue, Columbus, OH 43210.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, February 21 at the Columbine Room in the Lincoln Center, Fort Collins at 3:30 pm.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

FEB **21**. 3:30 PM (MT)

Lincoln Center
417 West Magnolia Street
Fort Collins, CO

Tribute Wall



“ Mrs. Gilderhus and family: I was unable to make it to the service today, but I wanted to say how important Mark was to me when I was a graduate student at CSU. He was on my thesis committee, and he also offered me a course to teach. He had a lot of confidence in me. It was that course that made me realize that I really wanted to teach at the university level. When I finished my program at CU I taught at a university in Utah for 20, and have just moved back home to Ft. Collins. I was hoping to tell Mark in person how much I valued him as an instructor, mentor, and friend. But I can't, so I'd like for you to know. With best wishes, Bill and Marilyn Cobb

William Cobb - February 21, 2015 at 08:18 PM



“ What a marvelous guy and model, whether as friend, colleague, or scholar. I knew him as all three, and he never disappointed in any of those roles. Lester D. Langley

Lester D Langley - February 20, 2015 at 08:13 AM



“ What a marvelous example as a colleague and scholar.

*Nathan Citino
Associate Professor of History
Colorado State University*

Nathan Citino - February 05, 2015 at 06:34 PM

TP

“ Mark was always generous to students, giving of himself to encourage them. In his field of inter-American relations, Mark helped develop the key themes through lectures, articles, and books. We will miss his wonderful smile and story-telling. Nancy opened her home to me when Mark invited me to speak at Colorado State and TCU. Those trips were absolute joys.

Tom Paterson
University of Connecticut

Tom Paterson - February 02, 2015 at 04:19 PM

SH

“ Nancy and family,
I had the pleasure of getting to know Mark and taking care of him on his visits to the Imaging Center. He was an amazing man that touched many. I so enjoyed visiting with him, he always brought with him a smile and kind words. I feel privileged to have known him. My heartfelt prayers are with you and your family during this time.
Shari RN

Shari - February 02, 2015 at 11:22 AM

JJ

“ I remember coming over to your house to spend the night on Friday nights and dancing in your living room with your dad before we went downstairs to watch movies. I'm so sorry for your and your family's loss. Thinking of you all.

Julie Jones - February 01, 2015 at 08:09 PM

MG

“ Dear, Nancy, Kirsten and Lesley.....my heart aches for you with the loss of Mark. He will be truly missed by many. 'Perhaps they are not stars, but rather openings in heaven where the light of our loved ones shines through to let us know they are happy.' I pray that you feel the loving arms of God embracing you during this time. Our thoughts and prayers are with you. Marcee (McLain) and Dave Gustafson

Marcee Gustafson - February 01, 2015 at 12:37 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Mark Theodore Gilderhus.



January 30, 2015 at 05:25 PM

GS

“ Remembering a wonderful friend, more important than we knew.....

Geoff Smith - January 30, 2015 at 01:09 PM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Mark Theodore Gilderhus.



January 30, 2015 at 11:30 AM

KT

“ *Nancy and family. . . my thoughts and prayers are with you.*
Kacy Thompson
Lund, Sweden

Kacy Thompson - January 29, 2015 at 07:01 AM

PS

Nancy you and your family are in my prayers

Paulette P Schaefer - January 30, 2015 at 03:27 PM

PK

Dearest Nancy and family,
We mourn your loss. What a legacy Mark leaves in his children,
grandchildren, and in his scholarly work. With sympathy and love, Pat
and Norm Klumpp

Pat Klumpp - February 01, 2015 at 09:50 AM

CM

I'm just flooded with memories about you and Mark and our girls back
in those early days. When I would stop by the history dept. at CSU,
Mark was always so welcoming and charming...with his deep
voice...even though he was up to his neck in "history business". Such a
wonderful, smart, kind man. Sending love.
Carol McLean

Carol Mclean - February 01, 2015 at 12:45 PM

TT

Lesley and family ~ I am so sorry to hear of your loss. I will lift you up in
prayer.

Tina Blackstun Turner - February 02, 2015 at 03:46 PM

MM

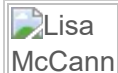
Dear, dear Nancy -- Your family has been in my thoughts so many times these past days. I know you have such great memories, and that at present, these memories bring tears.

It is my hope that, in time, these same memories will bring smiles. . . .

With loving thoughts,

Mollie Mercer

Maralyn Mercer - February 04, 2015 at 08:02 PM

 Lisa
McCann

Lesley and family. I am so sorry to hear about the loss of your Dad. Although I didn't know him I can see much of his handiwork in you, Lesley! My thoughts are with you and your extended family at this sorrowful time.

Lisa McCann - February 04, 2015 at 10:10 PM

MF

Generous is the right word. Mark was wonderfully supportive of doctoral students from all over the country, giving advice and encouragement with his unforgettable laughter and infectious enthusiasm whether he knew us for years or we had just met. I'll miss him.

Max Paul Friedman - February 20, 2015 at 10:58 AM