Robert Massie Dies At 66

Dear colleagues,

I am sorry to pass along even more sad news, this from the online version of C&EN. It is such a shame after only one year since Bob retired. This has been a year of major losses to our professional community.

Obituary: Longtime head of Chemical Abstracts Service guided chemical information organization into the digital age
By Susan J. Ainsworth

Robert J. Massie, 66, who led Chemical Abstracts Service for nearly 22 years until his retirement in March 2014, died on June 7 at his home in Columbus, Ohio. CAS is a global leader in chemical information and is a division of the American Chemical Society, which publishes C&EN. “Bob Massie led CAS to great success during a time of radical change from the print to the digital world,” says Madeleine Jacobs, former ACS executive director and chief executive officer, who worked closely with Massie. “He had the foresight in 1992 to begin a project that became SciFinder—a desktop tool that gives researchers access to a comprehensive collection of chemical substance and reaction information—which revolutionized and transformed the way chemists did research.”

In addition, “he built a strong foundation for the current leadership and staff,” Jacobs adds. “CAS’s success meant that ACS was able to expand and enhance its services to members and educators and to the public at large through ACS programs that led to a broader understanding of science.” Born in Queens, N.Y., and raised in New Jersey, Massie received a B.A. with honors from Yale College. He earned both a J.D. and an M.B.A. in 1974 from Columbia University.

Early in his career, Massie practiced law at the firm of Covington & Burling in Washington, D.C., before serving as a management consultant with McKinsey & Co. Beginning in 1982, he held senior executive positions with Canadian publisher Torstar Corp., and in 1989, he became president and CEO of Gale Research. He took the helm at CAS in 1992. Massie served on the boards of numerous organizations and supported events held at CAS such as the Columbus Symphony Orchestra’s Picnic with the Pops, Pelotonia cycling event for cancer research, and Cancer Survivors Day for the James Cancer Hospital & Solove Research Institute. He is survived by his wife, Ruth; his children, Jim, Nana, and Jackie; and four grandsons.

Our sincerest condolences to Bob’s family, friends, and colleagues.

Elliott