



The IALLT Journal

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IN MEMORIAM

RUTH TROMETER

IALLT'S LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD TO BE NAMED FOR HER



The beginning of the Fall 2016 semester brought IALLT some sad news, namely, the passing away of **Ruth Trometer, past IALLT president**. As many long-time IALLTers know, in 1989 it was under the IALLT presidency of Ruth Trometer of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology that the organization began hosting independent, biennial meetings on the campuses of its members.

IALLT owes its existence to Ruth Trometer of M.I.T. The year 1989 was a critical turning point for our organization. Our parent organization, the National Association of Language Lab Directors was in something of a crisis and the model for meeting together was usually in conjunction with a larger organization. The membership had grown beyond the boundaries of the USA and language technology was no longer limited to tape recorders and language lab consoles. A new direction was needed and Ruth broke new ground by organizing a conference at M.I.T that would become the model for this new direction. The conference held in 1989 would bring in many new members and set up the biennial conference model we have followed ever since. It also changed the name of NALLD to IALL.

Ruth was born in Merrill, Iowa, graduated from Westmar College in 1972 with a B.A. in German. She also earned a B.A. in English from Oakland

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University in 1974. Upon moving to Cambridge, MA in 1976, she began her career of language laboratory administration at Harvard University before taking on the directorship of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Language Learning and Research Center, a position she held for 30 years. She was an early and active member of NALLD and the New England regional group that were the forerunners of IALLT. After hosting the memorable conference in 1989, Ruth earned a masters in Educational Technology in 1992 and continued to influence the direction of IALL, subsequently IALLT, with her service and mentoring. She had a passion for international travel and languages, and loved the outdoors. She made her home with her husband Steve Nichols on a motor boat that traveled the Atlantic when not moored in Charlestown near the historic Boston Navy Yard and the USS Constitution.

Ruth was a loving, gentle friend to all who lived a life of service to her students, her faculty colleagues, and her IALLT family. Her influence helped grow a long list of IALLT leaders.

Ruth passed away in August of 2016 leaving a long list of accomplishments, as well as a long list of friends. Those who knew her will always remember her and think of IALLT, the organization she loved and led to new heights.

IALLT is hugely indebted to Ruth for her organizational vision and contributions. As a way to acknowledge her contributions to IALLT and honor her memory, IALLT is naming its Lifetime Achievement Award after her and it will now be called the **Ruth Trometer Lifetime Achievement Award**. IALLT's lifetime achievement award is given to recognize major contributions to the organization over a significant period of time.