

Rafael Artzy (1912-2006)

Rafael Artzy received his PhD at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem in 1945, under the direction of Theodore Samuel Moztkin.

After a long career at Temple University in Philadelphia, he came to the University of Haifa in 1973. His arrival here was one of the main reasons that a Department of Mathematics started to function there in 1972. Prof. Artzy was the department's second chairman, and later became a dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences. After his retirement he served as the Students' Ombudsman.

He had five PhD students: at Temple, Rutgers, SUNY Buffalo, and U. Haifa.

The research interests of Prof. Artzy were in the Foundations of Geometry, on which he wrote three books, and more than 40 papers. He was an editor of The Journal of Geometry. Prof. Artzy participated in many geometry conferences, mainly in Europe.

In the early 70's, Prof. Artzy organized the first International Geometry Conference in Haifa, and kept the tradition of holding a conference once every four years, until the late 90's, a task which he taught me how to efficiently organize, sometimes in a rather unconventional way. All of our conferences had a usual feature: we started by welcoming the participants in the airport, and at the end we were looking at the bus of the participants leaving for the airport, cheerfully waving their hands.

In each one of these conferences we had a day for sightseeing, that usually included a lunch in Kibbutz Amiad, where the Artzys' late son Ehud was a member, and was buried in Amiad's cemetery, next to his younger brother Barak. Rafael Artzy was buried there as well.

We will always remember Rafael as a devoted colleague and a good friend.

May he rest in peace.

Prof. Joseph Zaks

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