**CRAIG JOYCE PERSONAL HISTORY**

**American Society for Legal History**

**Interviewed by Charles Zelden**

**July 24, 2020**

Chuck: This should be fun.

Craig: Let’s do it!

Chuck: Today is July 24, 2020 at 4:00 p.m. I’m Chuck Zelden, of Nova Southeastern University’s College of College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences. I’m interviewing Craig Joyce, of the University of Houston Law Center.

Craig has been involved with the American Society for Legal History literally for four decades, and in a variety of roles. Most relevantly for today, Craig founded ASLH’s History of the Society Project (HSP): <http://aalt.law.uh.edu/aalt7/ASLH_Archive/aslh_history.htm> . Technically, Craig is still co-chair of the project, but I assumed the responsibility for active operations a few years back.

Craig: Nothing succeeds like successors.

Chuck: So you keep telling me.

Craig: So, correct me if I’m wrong, but the purpose of today’s exercise is to make a bit of a record about HSP, past, present, and future, and then you’re going to grill me about how I managed to cling to power for so long in the Society, yes?

Chuck: Exactly. So how did the History of the Society Project originate? What got you going?

Craig: Well, I’m a historian, for heaven’s sake, and after many years in the Society it just got to bothering me that we were a history society with no history. Charlie Donahue used to say that we were like a bunch of kids huddled around a campfire, passing stories from one ear to the next. But with nothing recorded in writing! And with all the infirmities of stories that get passed down orally from generation to generation.

Chuck: So you decided to do something about that.

Craig: Yes. I hatched a plan, and I presented it to the Board of Directors.

Chuck: When?

Craig: 2010. Informally, at the Philadelphia meeting. The project initially fell under the jurisdiction of the Projects and Proposals Committee as a subcommittee, but it moved to Publications as it matured. Incidentally, the endeavor originally was called, in short form, HOTS (because that’s literally how “History Of The Society” abbreviates), but eventually it became what it is today: HSP.

The members were: me; Maeva Marcus, because Maeva generously agreed for me to receive training in conducting oral histories from the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit; and my colleague Bob Palmer, because he generously agreed to host the project on his Anglo-American Legal Tradition (AALT) site at the University of Houston.

Chuck: What did you propose that the project do?

Craig: Three things. First, I wanted to gather together and preserve every extant document I could get my hands on concerning ASLH’s history. So, annual meeting programs, newsletters, that sort of thing. That’s done, to the best of my ability, although you should keep scrounging to fill in gaps.

Second, I wanted to record, in tabular form, who had served the Society down through the years: officers, boards, committees. That’s done, too, although it requires updating annually.

Finally, I wanted to do what we’re doing here today: personal histories. I called them that because, strictly speaking, they weren’t straight oral histories. I set out to capture the memories of distinguished, mostly older, members. But their memories sometimes weren’t that good. So I allowed them, or their interviewers with the subjects’ permission, to “clean up” their recollections after the fact when they saw the transcripts and discovered omissions or errors.

Chuck: How did you conduct those personal histories?

Craig: I didn’t, actually. I created a system under which I personally asked -- usually begged, based on long-standing personal relationships -- each potential subject of a history to let ASLH do one. I then allowed the subject to pick her or his interviewer, so that the subject would have a high comfort level about doing the interview.

I did provide a “how to” manual for the interviewer and the subject to go by. Between the two of them, they arranged to video their session and to get it transcribed. So I set up a somewhat decentralized system.

Chuck: And you did a great job. It’s there for all to see. But as you know, I’m planning to do the new interviews myself. There won’t be videos or transcriptions, which frankly require a lot of expense. The “new wave” of personal histories will be podcasts.

Craig: Believe it or not, I have heard of such things. Seriously, there are several on the official ASLH webpage these days. But there’s no inevitability about these parallel efforts being duplicative.

“Talking Legal History” seems to focus on recent scholarship by middle-aged and young scholars (although Dirk and Paul, for example, clearly are titans of long standing). “The History of the Society Project” always has been focused on what one might call the lifetime achievements of senior members of the Society. We aren’t about the latest books. We’re about preserving the history of the American Society for Legal History as lived out by its leaders.

Plus, besides on-going personal histories, HSP will continue to provide other resources to the Society. The documents and the tables aren’t going away.

Chuck: Where can the curious locate all the treasures that HSP has produced, or will in the future produce?

Craig: As said, unless or until something changes, at <http://aalt.law.uh.edu/aalt7/ASLH_Archive/aslh_history.htm> . Or, more safely (because Bob Palmer, who hosts HSP might someday want to change its exact location on his site), go to <http://aalt.law.uh.edu/> , enter the site, and click on “[American Society for Legal History: History of the Society](http://aalt.law.uh.edu/aalt7/ASLH_Archive/aslh_history.htm)” at the bottom right of the AALT index page.

Chuck: Let’s switch gears. When did you first enlist in ASLH’s service? What was the first office you held?

Craig: Acting Treasurer. I got my first job in ASLH on my first day in academia. I started teaching in 1981 at Vanderbilt. Jim Ely, who was Treasurer at that time and had chaired the committee that hired me, was going on sabbatical to England that year and asked me to fill in for him. I sometimes think he might have hired me for that very purpose.

Chuck: What did you do after Ely returned to the States?

Craig: Membership. 1982 to 1985. I must have done OK as Acting Treasurer because Buzz Arnold, the President of the Society (who went on to serve on the Eighth Circuit and is the subject of one of HSP’s personal histories), asked me to chair the Membership Committee.

Chuck: Then what?

Craig: Treasurer in my own right, from 1986 to 1991.

Chuck: After that?

Craig: Publications Chair, 1991-94.

Chuck: Next?

Craig: I chaired the Local Arrangements Committee for ASLH’s 25th Anniversary Annual Meeting, which was held in Houston in 1995.

Chuck: Tell me that by then you’d had enough.

Craig: Nope. Executive Committee, 1996-99.

Chuck: I actually know what comes next, because I eventually served on that committee.

Craig: Yup, Chair of the Standing Committee on the Annual Meeting, from 1998 to 2017. My longest gig. I really vividly remember Laura Kalman, who was then President (she also has done a personal history), approaching me in a hallway of the Hilton at the 1998 Annual Meeting in Seattle, and telling me that the Society was in “big trouble” as to coming meetings. All we had booked at that point was Toronto the next year. After that, nothing. So I signed on to do Annual Meetings.

Chuck: You must have done something decent as chair to have stayed on so long in the role.

Craig: I at least did some things differently. I decided to book meetings three years in advance whenever possible, which was most of the time. I worked with an outside consultant to professionalize the process by which the Society sought bids from hotels. Once I got the bids, I did usually a three-day site visit to the host city to tour all of the prospective venues. The hotels comp sleeping rooms, but you have to fly yourself in and out. Or you did. Now the Society covers that expense.

The reason to make those trips isn’t to go on holiday. Ten or twelve site inspections in the course of a long weekend is work. But it’s necessary. It’s amazing, but local arrangement chairs can’t do that adequately themselves (although I always invited them along on the inspections if they wanted to come). The reason is, they probably have been to several of the hotels and attended an event in their ballrooms, but they have no idea how complex it is to assess a whole hotel in light of the needs of an annual meeting: all of panel sessions, receptions, etc. I finally evolved an Excel template that makes assessing the suitability of all the hotels a pretty rote exercise.

I also, in partnership with the Treasurer, took over from the Local Arrangements chairs a whole lot of the mechanics of setting up the meetings. When I chaired the 1995 Local Arrangements Committee in Houston, I did everything -- including all of the contracting for the meeting -- myself. Of course, I had been Treasurer before that, so I knew what I was doing. But the typical L.A. chair doesn’t.

I did a lot of other things I hope will last, like arranging a dinner, on the Friday night of the Annual Meeting, for the immediate past L.A. chair, the chair for that meeting, the chair for the next meeting, and me to pool our experience and wisdom. Eventually, I added Program chairs, too.

But I’m going on too long. I obviously got really invested in Standing Committee responsibilities.

Chuck: I almost hate to ask, but is there anything else?

Craig: Well, of course there was HSP along the way. Also, I co-chaired Ad Hoc Committee on Archival Arrangements, on which you also served (as you did on the Standing Committee and HSP) in 2017-18.

And then I chaired Local Arrangements for the 2018 Annual Meeting in Houston. The summer before, I spent a month in Methodist Hospital beating pneumonia and having open-heart surgery. So pulling off that particular Annual Meeting was a real adventure.

I’m happy now just being a benevolent co-chair as you actually run History of the Society Project.

But it’s been a great run. I have literally never been out of office in the Society a day of my academic life. That’s something!

Chuck: It is. You want to do something totally different now?

Craig: Sure.

Chuck: I know, from talking beforehand, that you’d prefer not to do thumbnails of all the worthies you’ve known in ASLH –

Craig: Well, no. It’s what we lawyers call a slippery slope. And it’s also an impossibility. Under-inclusion would be inevitable. So, thanks for the opportunity, but no. And anyway, I’ve tried so hard, through this project, to record the actual voices of so many of them.

Chuck: -- and you don’t want to make a big deal of your scholarship.

Craig: Are you kidding? In a Society whose members have produced so much, and so outstanding scholarship? You and I have had the privilege to know such giants!

I can say a couple of things, however, besides: “See SSRN.”

One is that I am happy to give myself credit for bending what would have occurred if I hadn’t wanted so much to do history. My first dean asked, after all the courses I’d listed that I would have liked to teach (and turning me down for Legal History), if I’d be willing to bring Copyright “inside,” that is, if I’d be willing to take over the course from the Music Row adjunct who’d been teaching it. This is Nashville in 1981, remember.

What ran through my mind was: I’ve never had an intellectual property course in my life; I’ve never filed a single copyright registration; I’ll be one day ahead of the students in learning up the subject. But I figured the right answer to the Dean’s question was “yes, I’d love to,” so that’s what I said.

This is 38 years later. My casebook in Copyright is in its 11th Edition.

But what gives me the greatest satisfaction is that I outsmarted my fate. I managed to capture an admittedly small, but to me very satisfying niche: I am a leading legal historian in the field of Copyright. So there, Mr. First Dean! And by the way, I made Legal History a non-negotiable demand when Houston offered me a position.

Chuck: And the other thing?

Craig: I think it’s fair to say that I actually created another admittedly very small field of legal history studies: the importance of the early Reporters of Decisions to the pre-eminence of the Supreme Court of the United States as we know it today. My first article, for which I can even recall the cite, was *The Rise of the Supreme Court Reporter: An Institutional Perspective on Marshall Court Ascendancy*, 83 Mich. L. Rev. 1291 (1985). I wrote a piece years later about all 15 of the Reporters, nominative and anonymous both, from 1790 to 2005.

The whole thing eventually got to be embarrassing. Whenever anybody needed an article, or a contribution to a collection, about Reporters, I became the “go to” author. So I’ve got pieces and entries scattered everywhere. Oxford Companion to the Supreme Court of the United States. Yale Biographical Dictionary of American Law. American National Biography. Foundation Press’s Intellectual Property Stories. I mean, it’s ludicrous.

Can we move on?

Chuck: I know you won’t be shy about this one. Tell me about some of your most memorable annual meetings.

Craig: Let the record reflect a big grin on my face. OK. First off, my first meeting. In 1981. Washington, D.C., at the Shoreham Hotel. Because that’s where I got introduced personally to the Society, and to so many members who remain wonderful friends to this day. Also, it was exciting, as well as nerve-wracking, to deliver my very first Treasurer’s Report to the Board.

1984, Newark, Gateway Hilton Hotel. This, for me, was a really formative meeting for me in terms of my later role as Chair of the Standing Committee on the Annual Meeting. Newark seemed to me, at the time at least, not a lovely place to hold a meeting. It struck me as a compromise site. On Saturday night, the chaired professor types among us cabbed into New York City for Broadway shows and what I’m sure were posh dinners. People like Molly and me, who at least had a well-paying law school appointment, took PATH across the Hudson for a more modest dinner with friends (and got scared half-to-death on the way back by a Bernhard Goetz-type confrontation on the train). The assistant professors of history sat in their hotel rooms and ate PB&J sandwiches for supper.

So when I became Standing Committee Chair, I resolved to locate annual meetings in better surroundings and better hotels and to try to provide better receptions where all attendees could enjoy equally good food and drink.

Fortunately, that was not hard to do. Our committee operated “opportunistically.” We had multiple goals we tried to accomplish, including geographical rotation and a host of other factors. But luckily, there seemed always to be a university (truthfully, usually a law school) that wanted to host us for whatever its own reasons (including fondness for us and for our missions and often a desire to show off the school itself) and to provide sufficient financial support for much more attractive meetings.

The locations were welcoming, the hotels were, I thought, generally classy, and the receptions kept members on premises with the promise of excellent victuals and beverages. Later in my tenure, during the outstanding service of Craig Klafter as Treasurer, ASLH was about to offer receptions on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights that functioned as free meals for the assistant professors of history and the increasing number of graduate students who attended its meetings.

I do confess to one major gaucherie on my part in Newark. Membership numbers had dropped in the early ‘80s, which is probably how I came by the job as chair. At the Board meeting on Thursday night, my report contained the names of all those who had dropped their memberships over the last three years. I asked every member of the Board to contact a certain number (I think it was a half dozen each) of our lapsed fellow and urge them to re-up. The enumeration became famous in Society lore as the “deadbeats list.”

1986, Toronto, The Park Plaza Hotel. I remember this meeting for two reasons. First, Barbara Black (see her splendid oral history) had just become President, but also just been appointed Dean at Columbia Law School. The weight of the world had just fallen on her. Everyone knew that and sympathized. Second, after the Board Meeting on Thursday, October 23, we all joined Barbara to relax by watching the fifth game of the World Series, pitting the New York Mets against the Boston Red Sox. Barbara’s beloved Mets won in seven games. I assumed thereafter that she always watched the Series.

1988, Charleston, Francis Marion Hotel. At this meeting, the Board voted affirmatively on a number of motions to “democratize” the Society. I was not a prime mover in shaping the motions, although I supported all of the changes. The terms of the President of the Society was reduced from two two-year terms to one. I thought that a fine idea (coupled with making the Vice President the President-Elect, so that she/he could study ASLH’s operations for two years before assuming presidential responsibility), as well as the creation of the Nominating Committee. My only regret was that the shortening of the President’s term denied the incoming President, Lawrence Friedman, of the second term that had been the norm when he accepted the Vice Presidency.

1989/90, Atlanta, Marriott Marquis Hotel. The 1989 meeting had been scheduled for October 19-21 in San Francisco. On the evening of October 17, I was watching the pregame show for the Third Game of the World Series between San Francisco and Oakland. Suddenly, the scene on-screen began to shake. The Loma Prieta Earthquake had struck. Would the Bay Area airports be open for our meeting? What kind of shape would the hotel be in? It became instantly apparent to me that the meeting could not be held as planned.

I immediately called Barbara to ask if she was watching the World Series. No, she wasn’t. She and Charles were reading to each other. In the course of the phone call, Barbara did cancel the meeting, to be rescheduled later. Lynn Hogue, the Treasurer, and I called the 200+ registrants with the news. Lynn then arranged for a substitute meeting, which was held on February 8-10, 1990 in Atlanta, where Lynn taught.

The San Francisco meeting was rescheduled to, and held, in October of 1991. That time, the earth stayed still for the Society.

1990, Chicago. Goodness, I forget the hotel. Somewhere on the Miraculous Mile. Forum Hotel. Continental Airlines lost my luggage and didn’t find it for four days. But on Day Three, at noon, I had to attend the Annual Luncheon. So that morning, I walked down to Brooks Brothers, bought a suit and other apparel, and made myself presentable.

Shall we go on?

Chuck: Why not? That’s why we’re here.

Craig: I can try to pick up the pace. I will pick up the pace. But first we have to get through Houston 1995, which is my favorite annual meeting ever. Do you know how the Annual Meeting ended up in Houston in 1995?

Chuck: Remind me.

Craig: In the fall of 1993, I had just become Associate Dean at the Law Center. I was swamped. I couldn’t attend the Memphis meeting. Your mentor, Harold Hyman of Rice (also the subject of an HSP personal history), was then President-Elect. At Memphis, he proposed that the 1995 meeting, the Society’s 25th Anniversary Meeting, which would of course coincide with Harold’s final years as President, be held in Houston. He called when he got back from Memphis and told me I was chairing Local Arrangements!

Chuck: It sounds like the meeting got off to a fine start from your perspective.

Craig: Then Harold and I tussled over the venue for the meeting. I wanted the Warwick Hotel, a classic 1928 building which is now the very with-it ZaZa but then was quite sedate. Harold told me that’s the one place I couldn’t hold the meeting. Why? Because the elevators were too slow. People would come out of panel sessions, go back to their rooms or to the gift shop for the New York Times, and be late in arriving for the next session.

I went to the Warwick and checked out the elevators. Harold was right. They were incredibly slow. Plus, they were small and there were only four of them. So I set about devising a scheme to wire around the problem.

Chuck: I think I know what’s coming.

Craig: Yes, the most remarked-about aspect of 1995 meeting. The food! I decided that Local Arrangements would raise enough money to provide spectacular eats so that nobody would be tempted to leave the two session floors – which by the way have spectacular views of downtown Houston and Hermann Park and the Texas Medical Center skyline – between sessions.

We accomplished the goal. We had every posh kind of food one could imagine during the morning and afternoon breaks. Omelets made to order, strawberry sundaes, you name it. What elevators?

Chuck: I remember the food aspect fondly.

Craig: Actually, we over-accomplished the food aspect. We raised sufficient money to lay on Friday’s lunch around the pool. We raised so much money that I raced out on Saturday afternoon and bought cases of champagne that I personally poured for attendees after the final panel sessions. Probably not legal today.

Chuck: What else about the 1995 meeting?

Craig: I’m sure that the program was great. But you’ll have to excuse me for commenting on the meeting exclusively as a Local Arrangements person. We had a lovely Thursday evening opening reception, with exquisite food and drink, amidst the [Arts of Africa, Oceania & the Americas](https://emuseum.mfah.org/groups/arts-africa-oceania-and-americas;jsessionid=A6738E9A0D324AF98A285BEA4F42E44F) collection of the Mies van der Rohe building at the Museum of Fine Arts Houston, which is cattycorner northwest from the Warwick.

On Saturday, we replicated the quality of the opening reception with a closing reception in the dinosaur hall of the Houston Museum of Natural Sciences. The meeting personally welcomed and saluted, as our guests, the legal historians among the judges of the state and local benches of the state and federal governments. HMNS, as you know, is one block cattycorner to the southeast of the hotel.

You can see why I wouldn’t take “no” for an answer when it came to making the Warwick the meeting venue.

Harold did his part, too. He hosted the Annual Luncheon at the Rice Faculty Club, which is maybe a mile southwest of the Warwick. I had rented buses as a hedge against the weather. But it was a lovely day, and most people just walked. At the end of the luncheon, the Local Arrangements Committee led all present in singing a hilarious ditty about Texas’s crazy common law of torts (lyrics by William Prosser, who was a genuine great in the scholarship of that subject), to the tune of “The Yellow Rose of Texas.”

Chuck: How much did all that cost in 1995 dollars?

Craig: We raised $40,000 from law firms, corporations, individual lawyers, and law schools (although not much from the schools). I suspect that some of the lawyers welcomed the opportunity to be noted as sponsors of the reception for the judges, before whom many of them practiced.

So we raised $40,000. But I deliberately spent only $35,000, despite all the strawberry sundaes and champagne. The Local Arrangements Committee donated the remaining $5,000 to the Society to subsidize grad student attendance at future meetings.

Chuck: Shall we move on?

Craig: Yes. Quickly! Let’s see if I’m capable of doing a lightening round. Every single meeting is dear to me, but . . .

Next: 2000, Princeton, Nassau Inn. Special to me because, after I got appointed as chair of the Standing Committee at Seattle, I needed to book a meeting. Fast. Stan Katz really came through for the Society.

2002, San Diego, US Grant Hotel. Memorable because I thought it was such a coup to schedule our fall meeting where it would be sunshiny and warm all four days. Strolls in Balboa Part at dusk. Etc. Didn’t happen. Laura Kalman told me on Sunday that she would gladly issue me a presidential proclamation that it is never rainy and cold in San Diego for four days straight. Except for my ASLH meeting!

2005, Austin, Driskill Hotel. I adore the Driskill. 1886. Every historian should adore that place. Besides that, I thought the younger members would enjoy the Sixth Street Music scene.

2007, Tempe, Mission Palms Hotel. My hometown. When I located this meeting three years beforehand, ASU’s football schedule said that weekend the team would be at Washington State. But when we arrived in 2007, the weekend had become Homecoming. At least, that Saturday night we had the pick of all the restaurants in the vicinity.

Also, with Harvard money, the opening reception honored Charlie Donahue. And finally, this was the meeting at which Craig Klafter became Treasurer. Maeva Marcus, who had championed him for the position, always has said that Craig was her biggest gift to the Society. I agree. Best Treasurer in the history of the Society, including yours truly. Now there’s somebody who is really, really worthy of being your next personal history.

Chuck: Agree.

Craig: 2008, Ottawa, Chateau Laurier. Constance did just a splendid job with this meeting. The weather was perfect. In November in Canada! Got to visit Parliament and the Supreme Court. And who doesn’t love a grand old railway hotel?

2009, Dallas, Fairmont Dallas. Sally Gordon is probably still mad at me because the Standing Committee didn’t recommend the Adolphus. (Technically, the Standing Committee only recommends to the Treasurer, who then negotiates with the target hotel and then, in turn, makes a recommendation to the Executive Committee.) The Adolphus is right across the street from the flagship Nieman Marcus. But its ballroom was crazy shallow and wide to hold an Annual Luncheon.

2012, St. Louis, Four Seasons St. Louis. Who says the Standing Committee never did modern? Especially when ASLH can get a five-star hotel (we booked during the 2008-09 Great Recession) at $135 per night per sleeping room. We occupied every single room but one: the Presidential Suite. Paul McCartney had that one, for a concert across the street at the Edward Jones Dome. Fabulous views of the Mississippi and the Arch. As a special bonus, we got to honor Dick Helmholz at the Plenary Reception at Washington University, where he had taught early in his career.

2013, Miami/Fort Lauderdale, Hyatt Regency Miami. You did a fine, fine job with that one, my friend.

2015, Washington, D.C., Hyatt Regency Capitol Hill. We needed to get back to the Northeast (sort of), and no legal historian ever skips the opportunity to attend a reception in the Great Hall of the Supreme Court.

2016, Toronto, Fairmont Royal York. I’m not going to lie. This is my favorite meeting that wasn’t Houston 1995. Philip Girard and Jim Phillips put on the perfect meeting (from a Local Arrangements standpoint, because I never forget that the beating heart of every meeting is the program). Osgoode Hall. And then the Annual Luncheon and the Closing Reception in the Ballroom. The best of all of the Annual Meeting hotels.

2018, Houston, Hilton-Americas Hotel. Despite the open-heart, the pneumonia, teaching full-time, and my disappointment that the bureaucrats responsible for renting out the 1928 Julia Ideson Public Library absolutely won’t make it possible to rent out the facility, I have to include this meeting. Although it didn’t compare with the 1995 meeting, I thought of it as probably the last major service I could render to the Society.

Chuck: You have done much good service. So let’s talk about the Craig Joyce Medal --

Craig: I skipped over Atlanta!

Chuck: -- which the ASLH website describes as follows: “The Society depends on the volunteer labors of its members. It is fortunate in the number of its members who are willing to join in the business of the Society, which is to foster scholarship and teaching in the broad field of legal history. Each year well over a hundred names appear on this website on the lists of officers, directors, and committee members. Among that number, a few people contribute their time to the Society over many years in ways that are above and beyond the call of duty, even in an organization whose members have a strong sense of duty. The Craig Joyce Medal recognizes those individuals. It is awarded on an occasional basis to acknowledge and honor extraordinary and sustained volunteer service to the Society. The medal was first awarded, fittingly, to Craig Joyce, the Andrews Kurth Professor of Law at the University of Houston, in whose honor the ASLH Board of Directors created the award.”

Craig: Yes. But if I may, there actually are two, not one but two, things I remember so fondly about Atlanta 2011. One is the hotel. I had done my site inspection of all the hotels in Atlanta that had bid for the meeting. But I got back to Houston and called the external meeting planner – the person who interfaces between organizations and hotels during the selection phase – and told her that I really didn’t like any of them for ASLH.

She told me that there was another hotel, still under construction, that I might like better. So I flew back to Atlanta and I did a hardhat site inspection at the Loews Atlanta Hotel, complete with walking around the incomplete spaces with the building plans in hand. And that’s how we ended up at the Loews in 2011.

Chuck: Well and good. But what about the Medal?

Craig: I’m the last person you should ask. I know almost nothing about how the medal came to be. I attended the board meeting on Thursday night to deliver my report. And then, at the end, Constance asked that the room be cleared of everybody but the board and officers. So I left and thought absolutely nothing about it.

Then, on Saturday, I’m at the Annual Luncheon, doing my thing, which was to sneak around the ballroom snapping photos of the proceedings for the historical record. I’m seated next to Craig Klafter. At some point during Constance’s report on the State of the Society, Craig says to me: “Better put down the camera and stay right there in your chair.”

And then, out of nowhere, Constance announces the Medal, with me as the first recipient. I vaguely remember getting out of my seat, going up on the platform, having this medalion hung around my neck, and sitting down. It’s a good thing I wasn’t asked to speak, because I would have had nothing to say.

Chuck: Let’s close with me asking what the Medal means to you.

Craig: Sorry, but I’m about as speechless as I was in Atlanta. Truthfully, it means the world to me, but I think it means more to the Society. Many, many people selflessly serve to keep the Society a going, growing concern. This Medal is how we recognize and thank them. Just look at who’s received it since me.

Serving the Society just fell in my lap 40 years ago now. The American Society for Legal History has been far, far, far and away the great love of my professional life. I am so grateful.

Chuck: Thank you.

Craig: No, thank you. And the Society!