

Message from Prof. Graziella Branduardi-Raymont

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My memories of Riccardo go back to July 1975 when I first met him at the Varenna Summer School on X-ray astronomy, then still a very young field of research. I was a first year PhD student, rather intimidated by all the great people whose names I knew from papers I studied on, and whom I was actually meeting there in the flesh! Riccardo was obviously the more memorable one. Despite my very timid impromptu presentation of some work I had done with Copernicus data, Riccardo must have remembered when he asked me to join the team at CfA after my graduation, two years later. It could not have been a better start for a young researcher. My office was next to Riccardo's so I gained a view, rather a hearing, since Riccardo had his door open most of the time, of how things were conducted in the upper spheres of X-ray astronomy ... Riccardo liked to know how things were done at all levels, to get 'his hands dirty' of data as well as directing whole missions. Just after the launch of Einstein I was made responsible for the observing plan, and we had teething difficulties in the beginning trying to optimize the observing schedule with a rather cumbersome system. Riccardo decided he would find out how it was done and help me with the task, so we spent a whole weekend in early January 1979 working in his office to sort it out. Planning how to share Einstein

observing time among the CfA (IPC and HRI), MIT (FPCS) and GSFC (SSS) instruments was an interesting challenge, in terms of reconciling the desires of Riccardo and of the other PIs, often an exercise in diplomacy. I met Riccardo only occasionally at conferences after I left CfA in August 1979, but he generously helped me in my career more than once. Having worked with him was a good reference anyhow. It is sad that he is no longer with us, but his legacy is going to be a long one. It is truly impressive how much he managed to accomplish in life. I remain very proud and thankful to have known and worked with him.