

San José State University
The Department of Computer Science and
The Department of Computer Engineering jointly present
THE HISTORY OF COMPUTING SPEAKER SERIES

Bob Patrick

**Software is What the Hardware Designers Left Out:
Programming the Early Computers**

Wednesday, November 9
6:00 – 7:00 PM
Auditorium ENGR 189
Engineering Building

What was it like to be a programmer of the early mainframe computers? What were some of the founding principles of software architecture? How did changes in the computing environment change software? How do you help grow the nascent software industry?

Robert L. Patrick got into punched card computing in 1951. During the next 40 years, he worked his way up from coder to becoming possibly the very first independent computer consultant. Although most of his assignments were related to applications, he took side trips into system software, including the first operating system (the General Motors/North American monitor for the IBM 704), a back end/front end operating system extension, an early high-level computer language for business applications (FACT) which contributed to the design of COBOL, and a big database system (IMS/360). He was also a troubleshooter on a monster software development effort.

Bob has a degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Nevada. He served in the U.S. Air Force and then was self-employed for 30+ years. He developed a ranch, built a solar home with airstrip, and flew almost 2000 hours (mostly on consulting assignments). He was a RAND consultant and an ACM national lecturer. He cofounded Computer Sciences Corporation (CSC), sat on the Data Processing Management Association (DPMA) certificate committee, and served as a part-time Los Angeles Traffic Commissioner. Bob was a stringer for *Datamation*, a popular computer business and technology magazine whose print edition lasted 1957-1998. He has lectured at both UCLA and UC Northridge, and he has two oral histories at the Smithsonian and at the Computer History Museum. Bob is now retired and lives in Atascadero, CA.

Next: Alan Kay Wednesday, November 16
