

IN MEMORIAM

MONICA ANNE GOSLING (01.01.1944 - 14.08.2008)

J L Hilton (University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban)

Anne Gosling (née Scott) was first appointed as a temporary lecturer in Classics at the University of Natal in Pietermaritzburg in 1967. The next year she moved to the Durban campus of the University in the same capacity. After a year of teaching Latin at the Convent High School in Durban in 1971, she was again appointed as a temporary lecturer in Classics in 1972. She rose to be a lecturer in the Durban department in 1974 and senior lecturer in 1985. She remained at the University of Natal, later the University of KwaZulu-Natal, until her retirement in 2004, when she was made an Honorary Research Fellow. She died at the David Beare Care Centre in Pinetown on the 14th of August, 2008.

Anne Gosling was one of our links to past classical scholars who worked in South Africa. She had a close relationship with Natal Classics scholars such as Sim Whiteley, K. D. White, Magnus Henderson, E. L. de Kock, Barbara Bristowe, W. J. Henderson, D. S. Raven and Geoffrey Chapman. It is a sign of her place in the history of Classics in Durban that she features in one of the few photographs of the earlier generation of classicists that we have (featured left). Throughout her career she fostered good relations with her colleagues. The teamwork that characterised the work of the department when she was a full member of it can largely be attributed to her warm and humane character.

Another indication of her connection with past classicists is her recognition of their achievements, strengths, and weaknesses. Anne wrote two obituaries. One was for Barbara Bristowe, her predecessor in the difficult task of teaching Latin to large classes of prospective lawyers.¹ The second was for Professor Sim Whiteley, who is remembered as the founder of Classics in Durban. Anne writes of Whiteley: "We delighted in his gentle humour; we picked his brains on everything from Classics to crosswords ... we shared news of classicists worldwide with whom he kept up a regular correspondence. We enjoyed the company of a very unassuming but genuine person. With his death on 14 June 1986 we lost a dedicated scholar and a good friend."² Exactly the same can be said of Anne herself. Anne followed the example of Mr. Whiteley by donating her personal library to the department.

Those who have experienced the stress of teaching Latin to large classes of students, who in those days needed a full year of university Latin to qualify as lawyers, will know how much pressure she came under in those years. Anne put an enormous amount of work into teaching these students. Every week of this year-long module she would compose a three- or four-page tutorial that our administrative officer, Mrs. Joy McGill, would type up and have copied. This would then be read onto tape in the Language Laboratory. Afterwards the tutorial would be meticulously

¹ Gosling 1989:208.

² Gosling 1987b:1.

marked and the students would be given a model answer. Every year new tutorials were composed. In addition to carrying a heavy teaching load, Anne acted as the Head of Classics in 1998 after Classics at the University of Natal had been targeted for termination. It was in part due to her efforts at this time that Classics survived this threat.

Countless visiting classicists, colleagues, and students have expressed over the years their admiration for Anne as a researcher, teacher, and as a person. She had the ability to converse with ease with such luminaries as Sir Ronald Syme, Sir Kenneth Dover, Ernst Badian, Pedro Barceló, David Konstan and Francis Cairns. This can be put down to her sincerity and empathy with others, but also to her wide range of interests, such as fly-fishing, horse-riding, and cats.

Her achievements as a scholar were great. At the time of her death she was engaged in the writing of her doctoral thesis on “The Teller and the Tale: an Examination of Narrative Technique in Ovid’s *Fasti*, with Special Reference to Book 2”. Her M.A. was judged “excellent” by two very eminent British Classicists, Robert Ogilvie and Donald Earl, who noted that it “forms a valuable contribution to the understanding of ... the place of Apollo in Augustan propaganda and the way he is presented by the poets”. Moreover, one of these two examiners noted that he could not detect a single error in the text, certainly evidence of the meticulous attention to detail that is also apparent in her publications on coins, a branch of ancient history that requires highly specialised technical knowledge. Her other degrees were a B.A. Honours from the University of Exeter (1967) and a B.A. in English and Latin from the University of Natal (1965). In 1989 Anne put on an exhibition of coins from the Pietermaritzburg collection, together with her own coins. For this she compiled a unique catalogue that displays well her grasp of the arcane science of numismatics. Anne published in prestigious international journals, but her count of articles and chapters in books could have been much higher, had she not devoted so much effort to her teaching, external examining, attending conferences (including FIEC in 1994 and the Leeds International Latin Seminar at which she was a guest speaker), administration, guiding tourists through the Peloponnese and central Greece, Italy, Turkey and Roman Britain, promoting Latin in schools, writing reviews for *Scholia* (the original departmental newsletter as well as its successor), editing, refereeing, and building Classics through numerous public lectures and talks to the Natal Forum, Rotary, TAFTA and church groups. In many ways, Anne was a pathfinder for the future. She wrote a highly original but unpublished paper on Wole Soyinka and Greek drama and explored the application of her good knowledge of isiZulu grammar to the teaching of Latin many years before it became an official policy of the university to promote actively the study of isiZulu. It is this kind of selfless hard work that has enabled Classics to survive in Durban over these difficult years. Anne was a staunch member of the Classical Association of South Africa, the Classical Association of Great Britain (of which she was a life member), the Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies and the Joint Association of Classical Teachers.

In the last two years of her life, Anne lost her mother, husband, and father. She was married to Arthur Gosling, a minister of the Anglican church, for thirty-eight years. Anne fulfilled a very public role as his wife and companion. She was a true but unobtrusive Christian.

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