

Obituaries

Michael Daly (1931–2008)

Michael Daly, who died aged 76 in Pietermaritzburg in January, was an attorney, city councillor, director of companies and president of The Natal Society.

Born in Barberton, the son of a state veterinarian, he came to Pietermaritzburg as a schoolboy when his father was transferred to the Allerton Veterinary Laboratory in Pietermaritzburg. He went to school at Michaelhouse, and then completed a BA at the University of Natal, followed by an LLB.

In 1956 he was admitted as an attorney, conveyancer and notary public of the Supreme Court of South Africa, Natal Provincial Division, and was later also admitted as a solicitor in the High Court of Swaziland.

Daly practised as an attorney for many years in Pietermaritzburg, retiring in 1985 to become the assistant general manager and legal adviser of the Central Timber Co-op. He later became general manager of the Central Timber Fire Protection Co-op Ltd, which became Safire, and retired in 1999.

He was active in public life as a city councillor between 1961 and 1968 until obliged to resign due to the pressures of his legal work. In 1975 the Administrator of Natal appointed him a member of the Town Planning Appeals Board, of which he served as chairman from 1977 to 1985.

He was a director of various companies, chairman of the Pietermaritzburg Philharmonic Society from 1961 to 1980, and president from 1986 to 1998 of The Natal Society, which then ran the Pietermaritzburg public library on behalf of the city council.

When the Msunduzi Municipality assumed control of the library, he was instrumental in separating the accounts and holdings of the Society from those of the library and establishing the Natal Society Foundation Trust, of which he was a trustee and chairman from its inception in 1998 until his death. On his initiative the special collections of The



Michael Daly, 1970

Natal Society, comprising the libraries of William O'Brien and Alan Hattersley, were transferred to the Alan Paton Centre at the Pietermaritzburg campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Former director of the Natal Society Library Shona Wallis spoke warmly of Daly's 'ability to turn a meeting into a lively and amusing event, his command of the English language and his quirky sense of humour'.

Former secretary of the society, Pat McKenzie, recalled him as 'an attorney of total integrity, who was very principled, which some may have mistaken for stubbornness; and a respecter of tradition, with a sense of history'.

At his funeral, warm tributes were paid by two of his former articled clerks who have gone on to have distinguished legal careers. Mr Justice Kevin Swain of the Natal Bench wrote:

'Professionally, he pursued only what was fair and reasonable for his client, without compromising his duty to advance such interests to the best of his ability. This quality of fairness also found expression in the many years he sat on the Town Planning Appeals Board, in which forum the many judgments he handed down bear testimony to his considerable ability. He was, however, a modest man which meant that he never abused his natural ability to the detriment of those who appeared before him.

'I was always grateful for the confidence he showed in me at a very early stage of my career when I was a struggling junior at the Bar. To have such confidence placed in me by a very senior and experienced attorney, did a great deal for me and was one of the vital building blocks for my future career.'

Professor Lawrence Baxter, former Professor of Law on the Pietermaritzburg campus of the University of Natal and at Duke University School of Law, North Carolina, and recently retired Chief e-Commerce Officer of Wachovia Corporation in the United States, another of Daly's one-time articled clerks, wrote:

'It is sad to learn of Michael's passing. But as I recall the life Michael lived it is also a time for thanks and a time to celebrate a wonderful man. Michael was one of the best lawyers I ever knew. He was my first mentor and he taught me a standard of incisive thought, eloquence and juristic excellence that few if any ever surpass and to which I can only aspire. He also displayed courage: I remember the time when in the face of bullying by the government he refused to allow the doors of the Pietermaritzburg public library to be closed to children who were not white. Michael showed that to be a great lawyer one also has to be a truly honorable person.'

Daly is survived by his wife Marlene, four children of a previous marriage and eight grandchildren.

As a boy, he was taken by his father to St George's Garrison Church. In his retirement years its worship and welfare became the great passion of his life, and as chapel warden he was responsible for significant improvements to its fabric. His funeral service took place there in the presence of a large congregation. As he was taken from the church for the last time, the church bell, which he had made usable again after a silence of more than 40 years, was tolled possibly for the first time since the days when the British garrison occupied the nearby Fort Napier.

JACK FROST

Oscar Dumisani Dhlomo (1943–2008)

Business, the intelligentsia and politics in South Africa, especially the province of KwaZulu-Natal, have been dealt a heavy blow by the sudden death of one of the prominent leaders in these fields.

The death on Friday 29 August 2008 of Dr Oscar Dumisani Dhlomo, has been almost universally seen as a severe loss to the country. Dhlomo, who died the age of 64, cut his political teeth as a leading member of the then Inkatha Yenkululeko Yesizwe (National Cultural Movement), which was to later become the Inkatha Freedom Party, under the leadership of veteran politician *Inkosi* Mangosuthu Buthelezi.

Having joined the movement in 1978, Dhlomo rose within its ranks to eventually attain the position of Secretary-General, before resigning and quitting active politics in 1990.

During the same year, however, he founded the Institute for Multi-Party Democracy, an intellectual think tank whose aim was to foster and support the institution of democratic practice in South Africa.

Dhlomo was born in Umbumbulu, south of Durban, on 28 December 1943. He completed his matric at Amanzimtoti Training College before proceeding to the University of Zululand, where he obtained a BA degree in 1965, followed by a University Education Diploma in 1967.

He went on to teach history at Menzi High School in Umlazi, and while teaching continued to study privately, obtaining an honours degree and Bachelor of Education from the University of South Africa three years later. He joined his *alma mater*, the University of Zululand, as history lecturer soon thereafter.

Dhlomo held directorships in several prominent companies in the province. Among the several chairmanships he held were with The Natal Witness Printing and Publishing Company, the Standard Bank, the Development Bank of Southern Africa, Afrisun KZN and Shell SA.

Dhlomo's leadership capabilities and contributions received recognition through the award of the Ernest Oppenheimer Travel Fellowship from the British Council.

He was also a columnist for *The Star* newspaper, and co-authored two school textbooks in *Guided Social Studies* which were prescribed for grades seven and nine.

KwaZulu-Natal Premier Sibusiso Ndebele said Dhlomo's death 'casts a big shadow over the province of KwaZulu-Natal and South Africa.'

As an intellectual, said Ndebele, '[Dhlomo] attracted attention through his writing on the burning issues of the day with the problems of education claiming more of his thought-provoking attention.'

At the funeral service, Inkatha Freedom Party leader Inkosi Mangosuthu Buthelezi said Dhlomo's resignation from politics 'left a big void' in his party.



Oscar Dhlomo

Dhlomo is survived by his wife Nokukhanya, three sons and a daughter.

The funeral service was held at his place of birth, at the United Congregational Church, Umbumbulu, on September 6, 2008, followed by a cremation at the Stellawood cemetery in Durban.

THABO MASEMOLA

Robert (Robin) Douglas Guy (1932–2008)

When Rob Guy died on 2 January 2008 he was 75 years old. He leaves his wife Bella; they had been married 52 years and had four children and six grandchildren.

Rob went to various primary schools including Merchiston, Treverton and Kilgobbin in Pietermaritzburg and the Natal Midlands during the Second World War. It was as a boy that he used to catch the train to Underberg to visit his grandfather's farm *Peakvale* and it was here that he developed his love for birds (which he had from an



Robin Guy

early age), local history and the southern Drakensberg. He finished his schooling at Hilton College, where his father had been and where in due course his sons would go.

At Rhodes University he studied Botany and Geology and on graduating he initially worked for Anglo American, prospecting, and then was a game ranger and ecologist for the then Natal Parks Board. However, once Don was born he realised that he could not support a family on £40 a month and together with his father and cousin started farming bees and sugar cane. He went on to run one of the largest apiaries in the Southern Hemisphere with over 2 000 hives spread out over most of Zululand. One of his sons said that as a little boy he was taken to so many of the farms where his father had hives that he believed that his father owned the whole of Zululand! Rob became President of the Beekeeping Association and editor of their journal.

While on their farm in Zululand Rob and Bella had four children, three boys (Don, Duncan and Robert) and a daughter (Jane). After nearly 25 years of marriage spent in Zululand they moved to Underberg where Rob made a living by growing seed potatoes, building houses and commercial properties and for a while owned a share in the Sani Top Chalet. As time went on he became more interested in the natural history and cultural history of the region. He became the most knowledgeable bird watcher in the district and for many years contributed articles to the local newspaper and when the Southern African Bird Atlas project started in 1987 he became one of its most active participants.

As he grew older Rob was more and more interested in the history of the southern Drakensberg and became an expert on the San and their art, the early Zulu people of the

region and the European settlers. When he sat his examination to be registered as a San Rock Art guide his examiner said that Rob was the best-informed person he had ever tested! He wrote a number of pamphlets on historical aspects of the district and these were printed and are still 'in print' today. These are famous for the detailed primary research which he undertook and stand apart from other local historical tracts by the quality of their research. He helped discover who killed Hodgson and even found his grave! (Talk about cold case files!)

Rob and his wife Bella had many good friends in the district and his middle years were marked by his participation in the public life of the district: he served on the Health Committee, the Wildlife Society, Lions etc. However, he became known nationally and then internationally as a bird guide taking visitors from all over the world up Sani Pass into Lesotho. He also found a number of sites in the upland grasslands and down in the mist-belt forests and mist-belt grasslands where important, rare or endangered birds could be found and where he took many visitors. It is estimated that he took many thousands of visitors bird watching and it is certain that he helped foster a local tourism industry that today attracts over 20 000 visitors a year.

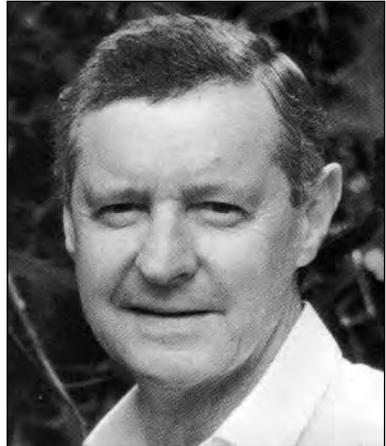
This rather bland description in no way adequately describes one of the most interesting and interested people we ever knew. Rob filled his life with an energetic exploration of the physical, historical and intellectual landscape in which he found himself. He was in every aspect of his life fearless and was prepared to try his hand at many different occupations and proved that he was equal to all life's challenges. He was a gentle person, he enjoyed lively conversation and with his passing we have lost a business partner, colleague, neighbour, wise counsellor and above all a good friend. We extend our condolences to Bella, his children, grandchildren, family and all those who loved this man who lived all his life with such *joie de vivre*.

BILL SMALL and STEVEN PIPER

Gordon Lindsay Maclean (1937–2008)

Gordon Lindsay Maclean, Professor Emeritus of Zoology of the University of Natal (now the University of KwaZulu-Natal), internationally famed ornithologist and author of the fifth and sixth revisions of *Roberts' Birds of Southern Africa* died in Howick at the end of March after a long battle with cancer.

Maclean was born in Durban in 1937 and grew up in Basutoland (now Lesotho) and the neighbouring eastern Free State. He had to leave school after Standard 8 (Grade 10) to do farm-work, where the outdoor life and the timeous gift of a bird book kindled his interest in birds. After completing his schooling by private study, he was admitted to the University of Cape Town



Gordon Maclean

Medical School for six months until his funding source dried up. He then joined De Beers to prospect for diamonds on the Skeleton Coast, where his abiding fascination with deserts and the adaptations of desert birds was born. His academic career began at Rhodes University, Grahamstown, where he graduated with a BSc (Hons) in 1963. Then it was back to semi-desert in the Kalahari Gemsbok National Park for 19 months doing doctoral research on the Sociable Weaver. He spent a year at Cornell University in the United States, prominent at that time in the use of sonograms for the study of bird song. And while in America he took the opportunity to visit deserts in Chile and Argentina.

In 1968 he was appointed a lecturer in the Department of Zoology at the University of Natal, becoming an associate professor in 1975 and a full professor in 1986. Here he was subsequently awarded a DSc for his desert bird research (thus gaining two doctoral degrees in five years), and he retired in December 1997 as Emeritus Professor of Zoology. During those years some of his numerous tasks involved the supervision of various postgraduate students whose names are all associated with advances to knowledge of southern African birdlife and who filled nearly every significant ornithological post in museums and provincial conservation departments in South Africa and Namibia.

A common experience for such students was of being ‘stretched’ by Maclean’s rigorous and uncompromising scientific standards and by his mastery of language. His English was impeccable and he was also fluent in German—self-taught by translating classical German choral works into English and by association with the Namibian German-speaking community during his diamond-prospecting years. Woe betide any student who used what he termed ‘non-words’ (such as ‘predated’), and his liberal use of a red pen on student scripts could produce a draft that Professor Steven Piper aptly described as looking ‘like the parting of the Red Sea’.

In the 1980s he was invited by the trustees of the John Voelker Bird Book Fund to revise *Roberts’ Birds* and the university granted him unpaid leave for two years so as to give the task his full-time attention. He rewrote the work completely and when his fifth edition was published in 1985 it rapidly became a best-seller and ran to six impressions. An entirely new feature was sound reproductions (sonograms) made from recordings of bird calls.

In 1993 Maclean produced the sixth edition of *Roberts’* incorporating new information which had become available through the published literature, through personal observations by other ornithologists and his own research and experiences in the field. Illustrating 907 species of birds in full colour, it incorporated a number of special features including revised and corrected bird names in English, Afrikaans, eight African languages and German (besides the scientific Latin-based names). The colossal, five-kilogramme seventh *Roberts* (2005) is no improvement in omitting not only the sonograms but also the bird lists in every language other than English and Latin. Moreover, Maclean was unashamedly scornful of the new bird names which it incorporates.

Other Maclean publications include *Aids to Bird Identification in Southern Africa* (1981), *Ducks of Sub-Saharan Africa* (1986) which won the Lady Usher Prize for Literature the following year, and *Ornithology for Africa* (1990), besides academic papers and invited contributions to the proceedings of international and local congresses and symposia. He was also well-known as a member of the radio panel for the weekly programme ‘Talking of Nature’ on the SABC.

Maclean was awarded a fellowship by the University of Natal in 1992 in recognition of his academic achievements and he was the recipient of the Gill Memorial Medal of the Southern African Ornithological Society for services to ornithology south of the Zambezi River.

In 1994 he played a pivotal role in campaigning for the choice of South Africa (rather than contenders Israel, India, Canada and Japan) to host the 22nd International Ornithological Congress in Durban in 1998. This was only the second time an IOC had been held in the southern hemisphere, and the success of the Durban event is now history.

In retirement Maclean took up painting in watercolours, an activity in which he soon demonstrated great skill, his pictures usually based on slides which he had taken of Namibian scenes. He even held a successful solo exhibition of his work.

He is survived by his wife Cherie and their children David and Marion who, together with those who knew him well, will fondly remember his penetrating (and often caustic) comments and his sense of humour, and rejoice in the rich legacy of his achievements.

JACK FROST and TERRY OATLEY

Margery (Mobbs) Moberly (1938–2008)

Margery (Mobbs) Moberly (70) well-known in Pietermaritzburg from her long association with the University of Natal Press, died in Durban in June after a brief illness, the victim of a particularly aggressive cancer of the lungs.

Born in Kokstad, Moberly grew up in Kloof, starting her schooling at St Mary's and, after her parents had moved to Eshowe, completing it at Durban Girls' College of which she was Dux in 1954. She then did an arts degree and teaching diploma on the Pietermaritzburg campus of the University of Natal, taking a very active part in student life. It was on that campus that much of her later working life was to be spent.

On graduating she taught briefly in government schools in Natal, then for a few years in Kenya at Limaru Girls' School, followed by a further spell in London before returning to South Africa in the mid-sixties to a post at Epworth.

The acquisition of a library science diploma brought her back to the university, first in the library, then to the university archives and finally to the university press. Initially termed the manager of the University of Natal Press, she was eventually awarded the rather grand title of Publisher to the University and built up the press from a shaky start as a somewhat amateur and part-time operation to a highly professional institution, internationally respected for the quality of its scholarly publications.



Margery (Mobbs) Moberly

In her years at the Press Moberly notched up an impressive list of publications. Among them were four volumes of the *James Stuart Archive* (edited by Colin de B Webb and John Wright), *A Zulu King Speaks* (with the same two editors), six volumes of *British Settlers in Natal* (by Shelagh O'Byrne Spencer), *The Colin Webb Natal and Zululand Series*, *The Anglo-Zulu War* (edited by Andrew Duminy and Charles Ballard), *Natal and Zululand from Earliest Times to 1910* (edited by Andrew Duminy and Bill Guest), *Enterprise and Exploitation in a Victorian Society* (edited by Bill Guest and John Sellers), *Receded Tides of Empire* (with the same two editors), *Kingdom and Colony at War* (edited by John Laband and Paul Thompson), *Betrayed Trust* (by John Lambert), *The Hunting Journal of Robert Briggs Struthers* (edited by Patricia Merrett and Ronald Butcher), *The Praises of Dingana* (edited by David Rycroft and Bhekabantu Ngcobo) and the two volumes of *Travels in Southern Africa* by the Frenchman Adulphe Delegorgue (both translated from the French by Fleur Webb and introduced by Stephanie Alexander and Colin Webb in the case of the Volume 1 and Stephanie Alexander and Bill Guest for Volume 2).

Perhaps Moberly's greatest triumph as a publisher was the production of *Pietermaritzburg 1838–1988, A new portrait of an African City* (a work now out of print) to mark the capital's sesquicentennial. It was a project which she both conceptualised and drove with relentless energy and enthusiasm. Edited by John Laband and the present Msunduzi Municipal Manager Rob Haswell (then on the staff of the university), the book embodied contributions by an astonishing 73 authors from a wide range of academic disciplines. It covered virtually every possible aspect of the city's history from two million years before the present to what were at that time contemporary developments.

Moberly's death coincided with the Cape Town Book Fair and, appropriately, the University Press flew the flag on its stand at half-mast for the duration of the fair.

Val Ward, formerly of the Natal Museum and a long-standing acquaintance said of her: 'Mobbs Moberly was a generous, witty and caring friend with whom I shared many meals, laughter and tears as well as the occasional argument. We enjoyed working together on *The Witness* series 'The way we were' in 1999. She was dynamic and a perfectionist who leaves a gap in the lives of her large circle of friends.'

Moberly never married. She leaves two older sisters and their respective families as well many friends. A well-attended memorial function was held in the Dargle.

JACK FROST

George Deneys Lyndall Schreiner (1923–2008)

Professor Deneys Schreiner was a pivotal figure on the Pietermaritzburg campus of what was then the University of Natal from 1959 to 1987. He was a scientist of note, but he played many other significant roles, both within the University and beyond it.

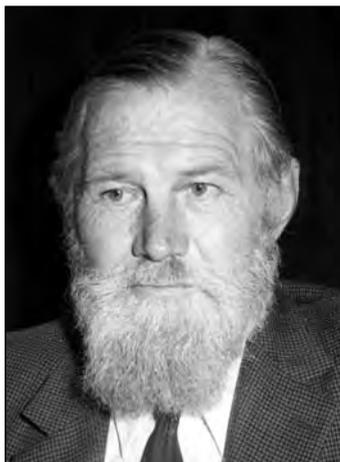
He was born in Johannesburg in 1923. His father was Oliver Schreiner, who became Chief Justice and challenged the Nationalist government on its discriminatory legislation. His grandfather was W.P. Schreiner, who had been Prime Minister of the Cape until he was forced out of office because of his disapproval of the war-mongering that led to the Anglo-Boer War and who later came to Pietermaritzburg to defend Chief Dinuzulu when he was charged with treason after the 1906 uprising. W.P. Schreiner's sister, Deneys's great-aunt, was Olive Schreiner, the distinguished author of *The Story of an African Farm* who was also an early feminist and a campaigner for justice. Schreiner grew up, then, with a strong inherited sense of social responsibility.

Shortly after he had completed his schooling at St John's College at the end of 1939, he joined the South African army, and served as a lance-bombardier in North Africa and Italy. In 1945 he went to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he attained a PhD in 1951. (He played for the University at rugby and for his College at cricket.) After 18 months as a Visiting Associate Professor at Pennsylvania State College, he was appointed as Senior Research Officer in the Nuffield Geochronological Unit at the Bernard Price Institute of Geophysical Research at the University of the Witwatersrand. He came to the Pietermaritzburg centre of the University of Natal as Professor of Inorganic and Analytical Chemistry in August 1959.

Much of his published research concentrated on the dating and chemical properties of igneous rocks, particularly granite. In the early days as a researcher at the University he had to make his own equipment, including a mass spectrometer. He published important papers in *Nature* and the *Proceedings of the Royal Society*. He was a member of the Royal Society of South Africa and also actively involved in the South African Association for the Advancement of Science. He was concerned about the teaching of science and was a founder of PINSSA, the Pietermaritzburg and Inland Schools' Science Association.

Deneys Schreiner's talents, interests and background pushed him beyond the important world of analytical chemical research and science teaching. He had a flair for administration and for taking the wider view. He became Deputy Dean and then Dean of the Faculty of Science and under his influence a number of significant innovations took place within the faculty. At the same time he was making an impact in a range of university committees.

He also thought deeply about society and its institutions, especially, of course, the university. He was concerned about justice, academic freedom and integrity, and social



Deneys Schreiner

and educational development. At a time when South Africa was being more and more tightly constrained by the government's apartheid policies, he was one of the fairly few academics who clearly saw the need to think against and beyond the pressures being exerted by the state. In a variety of ways he became a humanising influence in the university.

In 1975 he was appointed Vice-Principal in charge of the Pietermaritzburg campus, a post that he held until his retirement in 1987. In this capacity he had overall responsibility for much of what happened on the campus, as well as continuing to be influential within the University as a whole. He took an active interest in every aspect of life on the campus, encouraging innovations, often himself proposing different ways of doing things, and exerting his authority, when necessary, in a gentle way. One of his initiatives was the reduction of the length of a lecture on the university timetable from one hour to 45 minutes: this was done in order to allow students a greater range of subject choices.

Those were memorable years: they were the years in which, among many other things, the University of Natal was launched—was allowed to be launched—on to the non-racial path that it has of course followed ever since. Schreiner's role in the transition, and in hastening the transition, was a very significant one.

His dislike of privilege or discrimination was always admirable but at times almost quirky. For example, he disapproved of reserved parking bays and therefore at times had to walk some way to get from his car to his office.

He was also a lively influence in more relaxed circumstances. He played a role in matters as diverse as debating, drama and sport. And both members of staff and students enjoyed from time to time the hospitality of the Schreiner home, 'Highwood', at 14 Wendover Road. Professor Terry King, for example, who was grateful for Schreiner's continual support and encouragement for him when he was head of the Fine Arts Department, spoke of 'wonderful evenings at the house—witty and interesting and entertaining discussions surrounded by sculpture and other works reflecting the vibrancy of artmaking in this region.' In a letter published in *The Witness* ex-students Peter and Hilde Colenbrander, writing from Vancouver, recalled Sunday evening suppers: 'They were wonderfully relaxed and lively affairs, with much laughter, a great deal of vigorous discussion and a lot of good fellowship.' Another ex-student who paid a tribute to Schreiner was Blade Nzimande, the secretary-general of the South African Communist Party. 'I feel a sense of deep personal loss,' he wrote, 'as he was my principal when I joined the then UNP at the tender age of 20. To many of us, young black students from impoverished townships and educational backgrounds, he was like a father figure because of his passionate commitment to the transformation of the then "white" universities, his hard work to make us feel accepted at those campuses, and his total commitment to the abolition of racism and apartheid.' Nzimande also spoke of 'his incredible sense of humour, even in the face of adversity'. Those tributes are representative of many others that were received.

In Schreiner there was a fascinating combination of dignity and relaxedness, of what sometimes seemed a detached formality with great warmth and generosity of feeling. He was indeed, as many noted, full of humour: he could pull one's leg with a very straight face, and loved to play the devil's advocate, often deliberately confusing the person he was addressing, who was quite unprepared for arguments of this sort. This was a

kind of game, but it wasn't only that. He really did believe that everything should be questioned and tested, and taking the opposite view was a way of energising his own mind and challenging the person he was speaking to.

He was certainly a central figure on the campus. He and his thinking stood out firmly and visibly; there was something permanent and reassuring about him, as Blade Nzimande suggested. In fact he was, in his own very special way, an icon.

With his deep-set and alert eyes, his large beard, his often solemn (but also sometimes mock-solemn) face, he was, in his quiet and unassuming way, a figure who generated a certain awe. A cross between some of the old-fashioned depictions of God the Father and a well-known portrait of Charles Darwin, he was able to satisfy, or disturb, unbelievers and believers alike. But if he was a sort of god or a venerable hero-figure, he was an extremely friendly and kindly one.

In a farewell speech on his retirement from the University he was described as a person of 'sincerity, energy and dedication...man-in-charge, friend, arbiter, facilitator, innovator, catalyst.' In 1992 the Main Science Lecture Theatre on the campus was renamed the Deneys Schreiner Lecture Theatre.

But his interests and influence had from the first gone beyond the University, and he became a significant public figure. He was in the 1960s and '70s a leading figure in the local branch of the SA Institute of Race Relations. He participated in 1961 in the remarkable Natal Convention, which was a small and distant forerunner of CODESA which took place 30 years later. He chaired the funding committee of PADMRO (the Pietermaritzburg and District Malnutrition Relief Organisation). In 1978 he was instrumental in convening a Conference on 'Constitutional Models and Constitutional Change in South Africa'. This led to the publication of an important book and to his appointment, later, as chair of the Buthelezi Commission of 1980-1982 which looked at models of governance for Natal and KwaZulu.

In the years of his retirement he and his wife Else played the major role in the establishment of the Tembaletu Community Education Centre in Pietermaritzburg. Richard Rangiah, the executive director of the Tembaletu Trust, paid tribute to Schreiner: 'Nearly 20 years after [his] visionary idea of an educational park, Tembaletu has contributed to changing the lives of literally thousands of otherwise marginalised people across the province, sometimes in little ways and every so often in life-altering ways too.' He added: 'We shall all remember him strolling through the passageways of Tembaletu, popping into offices for a quick chat and joke with the staff.'

Schreiner had a wide range of talents. He was a skilled wood carver, for example. He and Else were very interested in the arts—music, theatre, painting, sculpture, ceramics. Their house is full of original local works of painting and sculpture. This has all been exhibited at the Tatham Gallery, and is due to end up there. One of the galleries at the Tatham is now named after the Schreiners. More broadly they have been patrons of the arts, and helped a number of black artists, particularly the late Vuminkosi Zulu and his family.

Schreiner married Else Kops in 1949. They had four children: Oliver (who died in 1978), Deneys, Jennifer and Barbara.

COLIN GARDNER

Victor Von Brunn (1934–2008)

Victor von Brunn, polar scientist and for 32 years lecturer, senior lecturer and associate professor in the Department of Geology on the Pietermaritzburg campus of the University of Natal, died suddenly in February in the city of a heart attack.

Matriculating from Vryheid High School, Von Brunn graduated from the University with an arts degree in 1956, majoring in German and Afrikaans/Nederlands. However, he was so inspired by the single course in geology which he did towards that degree that he went on to the University of Cape

Town where he acquired a BSc Hons in geology. This qualified him for appointment as professional officer of the First South African National Antarctic Expedition (December 1959 to January 1961) based in Queen Maud Land, Antarctica. (There must have been something in his genes because his grandfather, Dr Victor von Varendorff, had gone to Greenland as ship's surgeon with a German scientific expedition in 1908).

In Antarctica Von Brunn was responsible for the disciplines of geology, glaciology and geomagnetism. He spent the long Antarctic night in a hut buried under deep snowdrifts. His daily duties involved glaciological observations and the maintenance of geomagnetic instruments set up in another hut 200 metres away, free from any magnetic field interference from objects at the main base. During the summer months he carried out geological and glaciological work in the mountain area south of the base.

He was especially interested in the Aurora Australis, which he studied with the aid of an all-sky camera. These photographs enabled him to watch the development of this remarkable phenomenon over the whole area of the Antarctic sky. In 1961 Von Brunn was stationed at the Magnetic Observatory in Hermanus and in 1962 was awarded a CSIR grant to continue his analysis of geological and glaciological data under Professor Eric Simpson of the University of Cape Town. This came to fruition in an MSc degree (1963). In the same year he was awarded the South African National Antarctic Medal.

Geologists face the extremes of cold and heat. Between 1963 and 1967 Von Brunn was attached to the Chamber of Mines Precambrian Research Unit doing geological investigations on the fringe of the Namib Desert, research submitted for his PhD degree (1967), also from UCT. The following year he began his long association with the University of Natal.

At the time of his appointment Von Brunn was the sole member of staff of the geology department in Pietermaritzburg. He was assigned the task of expanding it up to graduate level, a status reached in 1973. He taught practically all spheres of geology up to third year level, but from 1977 onwards specialised in sedimentology, which he taught at honours level. Beyond that, he supervised nine masters and doctoral students and was the examiner for a number of others, not only at his own university but at the universities of Cape Town, Witwatersrand and the Orange Free State.



Victor Von Brunn

Besides his Antarctic experience, Von Brunn travelled widely. In his student years he had participated in a private expedition to central Africa to familiarise himself with the African Rift Valley and to ascend the Nyamuragira volcano. He spent time in the geology department at the University of Western Ontario and visited geological institutions in Australia, Britain, Canada, Chile, France, Germany, Korea, Norway and New Zealand. He was invited to be a member of the Norwich Spitsbergen Expedition of 1979, his participation involving the study of glaciers and glacial processes on the Svalbard Archipelago in the Arctic.

Von Brunn's list of publications in his CV housed in the University of KwaZulu-Natal Archives runs to an astonishing four-and-a-half pages of small type. It includes contributions to 10 books, 27 full-length articles in specialised journals, eight published reports and 26 articles in conference proceedings, published abstracts and excursion guides.

Von Brunn was a devout churchman, a member of the Lutheran Church of the Cross in Hayfields. It was here that his well-attended funeral service was held. Among the several tributes paid was that of Dr Owen McGee formerly of the Department of Geography. He and Von Brunn had joined the university at much the same time as young lecturers. As McGee's field was physical geography, specifically meteorology, and the departments of geography and geology were adjacent to each other, they had much in common professionally and a close personal friendship developed. McGee's expression of acute loss at Von Brunn's death was a widely-felt sentiment.

Von Brunn was married briefly earlier in his life to a woman much younger than himself but had no children. He is survived by the partner of his later years, Elize Osborne, and a large circle of friends.

JACK FROST