KENNETH OGILVIE MATIER (13/06/1934 – 26/12/2017)
Of all the Classicists of British extraction who have worked in South Africa, Professor Kenneth Ogilvie Matier is one who stands out clearly for the degree to which, over the course of his life, he became integrated with his adoptive country. His education began in Scotland at Busby School, Clarkston, and at Hutchesons’ Grammar School, Glasgow (1943-1947). Like many others, his family joined the wave of emigration from the United Kingdom to South Africa and other British Commonwealth countries in the bleak years of austerity following World War II, and his schooling was completed at Wynberg Boys’ High School (1947-1950) in Cape Town. Here, and later as a BA student at UCT (1951-1953), he studied Afrikaans

1 Ken Matier belonged to a generation which took titles seriously, at least in formal contexts. For example, in his letters, thirty-three of which have been preserved among the Whiteley papers at the University of Natal, Durban, he regularly addressed Whiteley as ‘Mr. Whiteley’ out of respect for a man who was his senior by many years and who was, in many respects, his role model. However, he also had a penchant for making up irreverent nicknames, such as ‘his Nibs’ for Robin Nisbet, much in the manner of Cicero when referring to Pompey as ‘Sampsiceramus’ (Att. 2.14.1 = Shackleton Bailey 34). In his letters, he referred to himself by his initials (KOM) or even simply as K., a usage that I follow here.

2 I am grateful to Louise Duncan of Hutchesons' Grammar School for confirming this information. Many people have assisted me with this obituary, including among others Rosemary Matier, Leonora Jackson, Terence Rapke, Jo-Marie Claassen, Harichand Somaroo, William Dominik, John Jackson, Barry Baldwin, Warren Snowball, David Gain, John Atkinson, Christoff Zietsman, and William Henderson.

3 Constantine 2003; Katzen 1963.

4 Mr. Lionel Smidt of UCT provided me with information concerning the courses K. studied at UCT. K. would have matriculated at the age of 16 and so would have embarked on his undergraduate degree at the young age of
in addition to Latin and English.\(^5\) (He was very proud of obtaining an ‘A’ for Afrikaans in matric\(^6\) and of later passing the Afrikaans Taalbond exams.) He taught briefly at the University of Fort Hare in Alice, near Grahamstown (1954), and at Rhodes University in Grahamstown (1955-1957), during which time he also completed his BA Honours degree, before taking up a short-lived teaching post in Glasgow (1958-1960). He obtained an MA degree at Aberdeen under Professor William Smith Watt (1961-1963), who was editing the OCT text of Cicero’s letters at the time (1958-1982), and who stimulated K.’s lifelong interest in Cicero.\(^7\) Thereafter, K. took up a position as Lecturer in Classics at the University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (1963-1964), before returning to Rhodes, where he taught for twenty years (1965-1984). During this time (on the 6th of January 1968) he married Rosemary Bach of Wolmaransstad, a town in the erstwhile province of Transvaal, and together they raised and educated two daughters, Jean and Fiona, who still reside in South Africa.\(^8\) In 1985 he was appointed as Professor of Classical Languages at the University of Durban-Westville, a position he retained until his retirement in 1998, when the UDW Classics department, together with Theology and Foreign Languages (including Sanskrit


\(^5\) K. was taught Greek later by K. D. White at Rhodes University, presumably as part of his BA Hons degree, when he was also teaching at Rhodes. K. was fond of relating how at the University of Aberdeen his Greek prose composition was described as ‘naked Greek’, since he had not been taught how to accent Classical Greek in South Africa.

\(^6\) Rosemary Matier confided to me that K.’s mother was annoyed with him in his matric year for devoting so much time to Afrikaans that his English suffered (he only obtained a ‘B’ for English in these exams).

\(^7\) Joe Johnston, Alumni Relations, University of Aberdeen, kindly informed me about K.’s Scottish background. For Watt, see Russell 2003. K. possessed a full collection of Loeb editions of Cicero’s works, which had been bought for him by his mother, towards whom K. showed a strong sense of pietas in her later life (personal communication from Jo-Marie Claassen).

\(^8\) K.’s marriage to Rosemary sustained him throughout his career. He died in Durban in KwaZulu-Natal on the 26th of December 2017, a few weeks short of their fiftieth wedding anniversary.
and Arabic), was closed down a few years before the merger with the University of Natal.

K. was a whole-hearted supporter of Classics in South Africa. He maintained his membership of the Classical Association of South Africa (CASA) loyally for many years, and served on the executive board of the Association for eight years in all: four as Secretary (1983-1986), two as Chairperson (1987-1988), and two as Vice-Chairperson (1989-1990). He served his two years as Vice-Chairperson in order to assist the new incumbent of the chair, Dawie Kriel, in the campaign to retain Latin as a prerequisite for law degrees. K. later looked on his participation in the fight to maintain this requirement, which was led by Kriel and which culminated in their meeting with the then Minister of Justice, Kobie Coetzee, as his ‘finest hour’. It certainly represented a unique example of cooperation between Afrikaans- and English-speaking Classicists in a common cause and deferred the abolition of the Latin requirement for five years.

The issue was complicated and has been commented on before, but it is well worth revisiting. Briefly, because South African Law has been so deeply influenced by Roman Law, and because many Roman Law texts remain untranslated, clause 3(2)(a)(ii) of the Admission of Advocates Act 74 of 1964 made it a legal requirement for lawyers and advocates to obtain a tertiary qualification in Latin before they could be admitted as legal practitioners. This is turn raised the question of how much Latin was needed at university to comply with the Act and, since most university courses were spread over an entire academic year at this time, a minimum of one year of Latin became established as the norm, although there were disparities at different universities in the interpretation of the rule and in the standard actually achieved.

The ripples excited by this controversy were eventually submerged under the waves of political change that were breaking over South Africa during the 1980s and 1990s. The reason for the united action taken by CASA in 1989-1990 was that the Minister of Justice at the time, Kobie Coetzee, was contemplating the removal of the

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10 Lambert 2011:56-57; Henderson 2014:127. Despite these brief comments there is room for a detailed investigation into this matter to unravel the depth to which the study of Latin and the Classics more generally was intertwined with the struggle for social change in South Africa. For the historical context, see Parker 2017:3-52.
requirement, which had been flagged as an impediment for social change – perhaps during negotiations between the ANC and the National Party government in the run-up to the transition of power in 1994. Whatever the truth of the matter, the incoming ANC government definitely wanted it scrapped, and the new Minister of Justice, Dullah Omar, duly oversaw its removal from the statute book by means of the Admission of Advocates Amendment Act 55 of 1994.

For those like Ken Matier, who vehemently supported the Latin requirement for South African lawyers, the teaching of Latin was of paramount concern. Those who have lectured to a captive audience of between two to five hundred law students, most of whom were resenting having to learn Latin and some of whom were resisting all efforts to make them proficient readers of it, can attest to the intense stress that such encounters generated. In addition, about half of these students - the males - had already been compelled to comply with military conscription, had been toughened up in the South African Defence Force for varying lengths of time, and were not inclined to accommodate the ideal that the law was intended to establish.

The response to this crisis was an unprecedented proliferation of textbooks on the Latin language in South African universities. Some adopted modern approaches to the teaching of Latin that had been devised for UK schoolchildren, such as the Cambridge Latin Course (CLC), while remaining critical of it for its lack of grammatical rigour and other deficiencies. Others resorted to the technology of the language laboratory, devising materials based on the CLC for

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11 Dr. Harichand Somaroo has informed me that at the University of Durban-Westville, statistical research undertaken at the time showed that the pass rates in Latin over a period of six years were significantly higher for Black students than for their Indian and White counterparts. However, the pass rates in Latin at other Black universities were, for various reasons, not high.

12 See the discussion in Matier 1983a. Many South African university teachers of Latin attempted to rectify the lack of formal grammar in the CLC by supplementing it with traditional explanations and exercises. The result was an awkward hybrid. The highly organized CLC project - well funded, founded on well thought-out principles, implemented by a team of people with appropriate skills and qualifications, well directed towards a specific purpose and sustained over a long period of time - stands in stark contrast to the ad hoc responses of South African teachers of university Latin in these decades.
weekly practice. Yet others populated traditional Latin grammars devised in the late 19th and early 20th centuries with example sentences drawn from legal texts, such as the Institutes of Gaius and Justinian.14

K. was initially enthusiastic about the advantages of legal Latin, as the following quotation shows:15

Prelim Latin16 is going to be a credit for lawyers as from next year so at last we step into line with Natal. BCD resisted this fiercely but Hansell and I gave the law dept. our full support and the issue was forced upon BCD. We tried to go one step further and have a legal Latin 1B course. We wanted to read Justinian from the word go and teach the lawyers ancilla instead of mensa etc. The law dept. actually requested this but Hansell and I were simply told that we were forbidden to teach legal Latin so that was that. We both feel that a glorious opportunity has been thrown away. We are certain that lawyers would have come to Rhodes to do the new Latin course once it had been properly established and this would have worked wonders with student numbers.

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13 This was the case at the University of Natal, Durban, where the lecturing staff put in hours of preparation every week devising these repetitive exercises. Virtually every South African university had its own Latin teaching course at this time. In hindsight these initiatives represent a wasteful duplication of effort, but they were on the whole a sincere response to a very abnormal teaching crisis by Classics departments which were being starved of the necessary resources and were facing on-going financial cuts and escalating threats of closure.

14 Kriel 1977, a very compact book covering the whole of Latin grammar in just over 200 pages. This book was very successful in South Africa, and was translated into English by Prof. F. Saayman, as Latin for the Law-student. See also Lubbe 1979, which evolved from earlier guides to learning Latin published by UNISA and which was translated into English by Dr. (later Judge) D. H. van Zyl. The introduction reveals the author’s intention to realize the purpose of the legal requirement for those entering the law: ‘This book is designed . . . [to equip you] . . . for your profession’ (p. xvi).


16 This term needs explanation. With a matric pass in Latin, a student could register for Latin 1 at university. With no matric Latin in the earlier days, the norm was for the student to register for one or two years of preliminary Latin, otherwise known as ‘Special Latin’, before registering for Latin 1.
However, by 1983 K. had become wary of the dangers of embarking on grammars of legal Latin, and judged that the CLC prepared students as well as any other approach for reading legal texts. The price paid by South African Classicists for devoting so many hours to the preparation of teaching materials and marking of weekly tutorials was high, and it goes a long way towards explaining the relatively low research output in Classics in South African universities at the time.

Despite the pressure of having to teach such large and difficult courses, K. had a genuine love of Classics, especially the Latin language. His participation in an international conference at the University of Durham in 1986, conducted entirely in Latin, and his contribution to this conference on the theme of Classics in South Africa, bear testimony to this. His fondness for Latin composition was stimulated by his mentor during his early career at Rhodes, Mr. Samuel (Sim) Whiteley, the Oxford-educated English Classicist for whom he wrote two obituaries. For many years K. corresponded with Whiteley (especially between 1971 and 1977, when he was in Grahamstown and Whiteley was in Durban), and the nuances of the Latin language frequently featured in their discourse.

17 Matier 1983a:19. However, K. eventually did get his way in respect of legal Latin. On his appointment to the chair of Classics at UDW, he asked Alan Botha and Harichand Somaroo to devise a one-year Legal Latin course to replace Latin 1A, Latin 1B and Latin 1 (a three-year programme required by UDW). This was done by adapting Saayman’s translation of Kriel’s textbook in 1984 and this material was implemented in 1985 (personal communication with H. Somaroo). Other universities in South Africa made similar arrangements, with preliminary modules being eventually incorporated into Latin 1.


19 Matier 1986a. For K.’s thoughts on South African Classics, see also Matier 1988a.

20 Matier 1986b, Matier 1986c. In his later years K. also wrote a fuller unpublished account of Whiteley’s life based partly on his own surviving letters.

21 A good example of this is K.’s discussion of the phrase lactea colla in Silius Italicus 16.519, which Duff 1927-1934 translates as ‘snow-white neck’ but which Jackson Knight 1956 translated more correctly as ‘milk-white’ at Aen. 8.660 (letter to S. Whiteley, 8 Jan 1972). The letter goes on
Another theme of these letters was K.’s love of travel, especially by sea, and his enthusiasm for visiting Classical sites. In a letter dated 25 April 1972, for example, he writes about his trip to Rome and Greece as follows:

I am sure I have told you that the highlight of the whole trip for me was to stand in the Roman forum and to look with awe upon the curia, rostra, and comitia. I walked around ever so slowly like a man in a trance. It is thirty years since I first heard of these places and I have talked to students about them for 13 years so perhaps I can be forgiven for being so moved. After the Forum the ruins of Ephesus made the greatest impression. That very hot spring morning will always remain indelibly fixed in my memory, and the pleasure of the trip was greatly enhanced by the charming Turkish medical student who was our guide – she certainly knew her classics.

These tours of the Mediterranean world sometimes caused him to reflect on his academic studies of Silius Italicus, as he does in the same letter quoted above: ‘I certainly saw many examples of vines “wedded” to trees in Italy and also quite a bit of the countryside I have studied in the Punica, notably Lake Trasimene.’ K.’s doctoral thesis, and most of his publications, were devoted to countering the negative verdicts of mainly nineteenth- and twentieth-century English Classicists on the poetical merit of Silius Italicus, at a time when these views predominated. He first contemplated the Punica as suitable subject for a literary commentary during his sabbatical in Oxford in 1971, during which he studied the poem together with Robin Nisbet at Corpus Christi College. This project was to occupy his attention for the next eight years, during which he corresponded with leading scholars on the Punica, such as to discuss in detail recent reviews of Duff’s translation which K. had been reading in the Bodleian library in Oxford.

22 Matier 1979.
24 Matier 1986a:176: Professor Nisbet mihi suasit ut me ad studium Sili Italici verterem. A letter of 20 December 1971 to Sim Whiteley attests to the good working relationship he had with Nisbet. A letter of 8 January 1972 states that Nisbet preferred Matier’s translation of Silius to that of Duff 1927-1934.
Richard Bruere, Edward Basset, Josef Delz, and John Dunston. He also discussed the planned commentary with South African Classicists, such as Gregor Maurach, before completing it under the practical supervision of David Gain and William Henderson in 1979. Most scholars now recognize the importance of Matier’s defence of Silius Italicus as a writer. At a time when the complexities of cultural identity were not widely discussed in Classics, Matier argued that Hannibal was the ‘real hero’ of the poem.

South African Classicists rarely have the luxury of being able to combine their teaching and their research activities, and K.’s experience was no different. Workloads were and still are generally exceptionally high by international standards, the allocation of lectures to staff was sometimes inequitable, and K. frequently complained of having to do seventeen lectures a week – a familiar lament. In addition to teaching Latin to lawyers, K. compiled a selection of Horace’s Odes, which was used at Rhodes, the University of Cape Town, and the University of Natal in both Pietermaritzburg and

27 Matier 1979:iii. According to John Jackson, this was the first and only doctorate in Classics conferred by Rhodes University in the 113 years of its history. Nisbet, Basset, and Whiteley are also mentioned in the preface as assisting with the thesis, which was remarkably thorough. It ran to 520 pages and included a detailed analysis of the sources used by Silius Italicus, in which similarities between Silius and his sources are indicated by underlining the text manually using various coloured inks (pp. 18-110). K.’s exhaustive thoroughness is also evident in his personal copy of the two Loeb volumes of Silius in which virtually every page has been underlined in ballpoint pens of various colours and annotated in K.’s crabby hand-writing with variant readings and other observations.
28 See, for example, Dominik 2010:437 (‘The staunchest defender of Silius as a poet has been Matier, who mounted a rearguard action against the type of criticism that prevailed for most of the twentieth century.’)
29 Matier 1989a:4 (‘My contention will be that Hannibal, in spite of his faults, is the only figure in the poem who has any real life and that he qualifies for the role of hero.’); see now Dominik 2002, Stocks 2014.
Durban for many years. In addition to such undergraduate teaching, university staff were expected to undertake postgraduate supervisions and Ken supported many such students through their dissertations. Lecturers also felt an obligation to support the teachers of Latin and K. played an important part in the effort to retain Latin in South African High schools.

Above all, however, K. had a great capacity for forming lasting friendships. A conspicuous example of this was his long-standing friendship with Mike Truu, the Professor of Economics at Rhodes University, who later invited K. to his homeland, Estonia – another country in which Classics still survives despite profound social upheavals. K. later wrote up and published an account of this visit.

K.’s career as a Classicist coincided with troubled years in South African history but throughout this time he devoted himself above all to the task of communicating his love of the Latin language and its literature to students of all races, many of whom went on to become teachers and university lecturers themselves. K. saw Roman rhetoric, in particular, as a skill that could still be deployed in debate in the modern world. When challenged to a mock trial by a Latin III student during Rag Week at Rhodes, he followed Hansell Hewitt’s suggestion that he deliver an ‘impassioned Ciceronian oration’, despite his initial misgivings. This incident is typical of K.’s determination, which was manifested throughout his career, to bring his Classical learning to life in the wider community, and to hand on the legacy that he had received from his mentors to the younger generation of Classicists in South Africa.


32 A notable example of this is K.’s support for and supervision of the unique doctoral studies of Dr. Harichand Somaroo at the University of Durban-Westville (Somaroo 1995). Somaroo had previously obtained an MA under the supervision of Giovanni Cipolla (Somaroo 1982).

33 Matier 1983c.

34 Matier 1993b.

Bibliography


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My recollection of the exact time and place when I first saw Ken Matier is clear. It was on a very warm early January evening 1983, in the lounge bar of the New Union Hotel, Pretoria. The occasion was the first evening of that year’s biennial national conference of the Classical Association of South Africa. In order to more fully immerse myself in the life of the conference and to attempt to get to know my fellow delegates better, I had decided to stay in Pretoria – its eponymous university was the host that year – rather than return to Johannesburg each night.

Within hours of arriving and registering for the gathering, I was regretting the decision. At first sight a South African classical conference seemed to be utterly alien to the ones that I had come to know and enjoy in Australia over more than half a dozen years as a graduate student, then junior academic in Classical Studies. The Antipodean versions were unfailingly convivial, not to say bibulous, relaxed, and almost devoid of formality in both dress and attitude. By contrast, my first few hours’ experience of the South African counterpart seemed as different as it was possible to get. Colleagues addressed one another not by first names but predominantly by titles. They zealously attended one another’s papers. They mostly spoke to each other in a language (Afrikaans) with which I was barely acquainted. They were preponderantly male, and almost all wore suits.

As I sat in the lounge bar contemplating those few delegates who had consigned themselves to a working week cohabiting with their colleagues, my gaze was drawn to two male figures seated next to each other in large armchairs beside the hotel’s (unlit) main fireplace. The larger of the two, a robust and vivid individual with a parade-ground voice, who was consuming Amstel beers at a pace that even an Australian could admire, I learned was Dr. Ken Matier – senior lecturer in Classics at Rhodes University and shortly to be elected into the first of his two terms as national secretary of the Classical Association. The slighter of the two, a smaller, older, and very
elegant individual who was chain smoking French cigarettes, Gitanes, I think, and tossing back snifters of South African brandy, turned out to be Associate-Professor (W.) Hansel Hewitt – Rhodes departmental colleague and boon companion of Ken Matier, and destined to be chosen as the next national Vice-Chairman of the Classical Association. I introduced myself to them both, was delighted to hear that they were conversing solely in English, and accepted the offer of a beer. It was to be a long evening – full of entertaining anecdotes and insights, and one that I only hazily recalled the next day. Thus began my more than 30-year friendship with Ken, which ended only with his death on Boxing Day 2017.

It was fitting and prophetic that we met at a national conference. Ken and I were to go on to attend every such meeting including the one at the University of Cape Town in 1991. We also attended most of the Colloquia Didactica which were held in the ‘off years’, the even-numbered years when national conferences were not held. For eight of these years, from 1983 to 1991, Ken continuously and with distinction served the Classical Association executive – first as Secretary (1983-1986); Chairman (1987-1988); and Vice-Chairman (1989-1990). At the 1991 conference it was Ken’s responsibility, as Vice-Chairman, to chaperone the guest of honour – none other than the national Minister for Education, Professor Gerrit Viljoen (himself a Classicist).

There was another facet to the effort that Ken put into making the Classical Association and its activities more accessible and more enjoyable. He served as an invaluable bridge between the Afrikaans- and English-speaking wings of the Association. At the beginning of the 1980s there was a sharp divide between the two. Ken’s written and spoken Afrikaans was excellent, thanks to his grounding at Wynberg Boys’ High. He could handle meetings in either of the then two official languages. An endless flow of official correspondence in both languages was produced on his beloved IBM ‘Golfball’ typewriter, especially during the four years in which he was national Secretary of the Association. His fluency in Afrikaans earned him great respect and even affection from the Afrikaans-speaking Classicists, and his election as Chairman of the Association owed much to their support. At the same time, his origins in Scotland gave him extensive ‘street cred’ amongst the English speakers and, in particular, those who (like myself) arrived in South Africa to assume our posts in the late 1970s and early 1980s.
Ken was a Scot – by birth, temperament, and instinct. The initial three or four years of his secondary education were at Hutchesons’ Grammar School in the Glasgow area – an experience which gave him a lifelong respect and affection for a British grammar school education and the advantages that accompanied it, and a contempt for those who would attempt to tamper with or degrade it. A unique childhood memory of his native land was living through the incident in which Hitler’s deputy, Rudolf Hess, parachuted into Scotland near Ken’s home town south of Glasgow on his abortive ‘peace mission’ with the Duke of Hamilton late in the evening of 10 May 1941. Although only seven years of age at the time, Ken somehow perceived that with the arrival and immediate capture of Hess he had experienced something of historical significance. His Scottish temperament came out most strongly in his feuds and vendettas. The motto of Scotland’s own order of chivalry, The Thistle, seemed tailor-made for Ken. It is, of course, nemo me impune lacessit.

Once landed in Cape Town, it was Ken’s good fortune to be sent to Wynberg Boys’ High School to complete his schooling. Not only did it provide him with an excellent platform for his undergraduate study of Latin at UCT, but he came away from the experience with an excellent grasp of Afrikaans. His affection for his old school was repaid in his later years with an invitation to address an assembly of the entire school, an honour which he frequently described and cherished to the end of his life. His school and undergraduate days in Cape Town were like a wonderland for Ken, especially from the time when the family moved to Fish Hoek. He became a powerful and swift swimmer. On one occasion he was followed across Fish Hoek Bay by a curious dolphin. Despite the shouts from bystanders on the shore that he was not being pursued by a shark, Ken made the swim in a time that deserves a record-book mention.

At that time Ken was still a devout and proselytising member of his family’s faith, the Plymouth Brethren, and would later recount how he attempted to make the local youth mend their ways and join the faith by preaching from a makeshift pulpit on the sands of Fish Hoek beach. In his later years, when the pulpit had given way to the lecterns of Rhodes University and the University of Durban-Westville, the beaches and the sea still held a massive attraction for Ken. His frequent correspondence with his friend and mentor, S. H. Whiteley, attests to his pleasure in the sea voyages that he took when travelling to and from Europe while on study leave from Rhodes. In
the early years of this century, Ken and his wife Rosemary visited us in Cape Town during the time when they were embarking on and returning from an extended voyage to and from St. Helena on the RMS St. Helena. It was to be his last such trip. My wife and I accompanied them to Cape Town harbour’s ‘J Wharf’ from which the ship was due to sail. Conditions for embarking passengers were hardly luxurious, as Ken wryly observed while the four of us sat in a dusty open shed on a bale of what appeared to be mouldering wool covered in pigeon droppings, waiting for the boarding announcement!

Ken’s family life was privately cherished by him. An invitation to join his wife and family at their home in Westville was a rare honour and invariably enjoyable. Rosemary, who had been head of music at Victoria College, Grahamstown, was largely responsible for Ken’s own pleasure in music – a facet of his personality that many of his friends were unaware of. In his last years he became a doting grandparent to the children of the elder of his two daughters. At the time of his death Rosemary and he had been married for just under a month short of fifty years.

Ken, despite his Caledonian propensity for long-lived animosities, had an impressive list of enduring friendships both in this country and abroad. Further afield he remained lifelong friends with, inter alios, Barry Baldwin, Jasper Griffin, Paul Murgatroyd, and K.D. White. At home Ken’s special friends included Leonora Jackson and her husband, the late Steven Jackson, John Hilton, Bill Henderson, Hansel Hewitt (who had taught Ken as an undergraduate at UCT in the early 1950s before they became colleagues at Rhodes), Frank Goodyear until his death in 1987, and myself. Those of us who lived beyond the Durban / Pietermaritzburg areas were the recipients of frequent telephone calls, as well as numerous letters typed on the trusty IBM machine – often containing entertaining cuttings from magazines and newspapers. As with his correspondence in the 1970s with ‘Old Man Whiteley’ (as Ken reverentially referred to him), Ken’s letters contained a rich variety of personal and academic news.

His propensity for bestowing pet names on almost anything was sometimes highly amusing. The home of his brother-in-law who held the chair of Afrikaans and Nederlands at the Pietermaritzburg campus of the then University of Natal was unfailingly referred to as ‘The Belgian Embassy’ on account of its incumbent’s national origins. Our apartment complex in Johannesburg became ‘Trump
Towers’. When he met with his friends the occasions were marked by hospitality and good fellowship, as well as happy reminiscences of earlier and possibly more exciting times, particularly CASA biennial conferences and battles won (and lost) there.

Ken died on Boxing Day, 26th December 2017. His final illness was short and unexpected, although his latter years had been punctuated by sporadic bouts of ill-health. But his zest for companionship and good conversation had not waned. We all miss him as a controversial but always larger-than-life colleague, ally, and friend.

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